

# The Digital Evolution of the Traditional Marketplace

an analysis of the Raleigh Flea Market

Russell Pinkston

ADN 502 – Design Anthropology

Fall 2017



A photograph of the Raleigh Flea Market. In the foreground, several people are walking along a paved path. To the left, there's a blue pickup truck parked near a white tent. To the right, there are blue and white tents, some with items for sale like a bicycle and a small table. In the background, a large modern building with a curved roof is visible under a clear sky.

# The Raleigh Flea Market

- **Traditional & Community-Oriented**

Operates on a system of dickering with individual, local merchants

- **Nostalgic**

A collection of histories and characters, a living museum of local culture

- **Unpredictable**

Its organization creates a “browsing” experience, rather than a “shopping” experience, which can make it difficult to find any specific item



# A Modern Lens

---

- Initial negative perceptions are often seen through the lens of the modern marketplace of “big box” stores and online retailers.
- This gives the traditional marketplace new meaning in the face of modern consumerism.





# The Modern Shopper

- Modern consumers often have very limited time to shop.
- They have become accustomed to shopping impersonally through stores like Target, Walmart, and Amazon, where they can get in and out quickly.
- The Raleigh Flea Market is the opposite experience, which may feel awkward to many modern consumers.







# The Modern Marketplace

- **Convenient**

95% of Americans shop at Walmart  
84% Shop at Target  
(2016)

- **Invasive**

Replacement of local culture with low-quality disposable items, overwriting that culture

- **Exogenous**

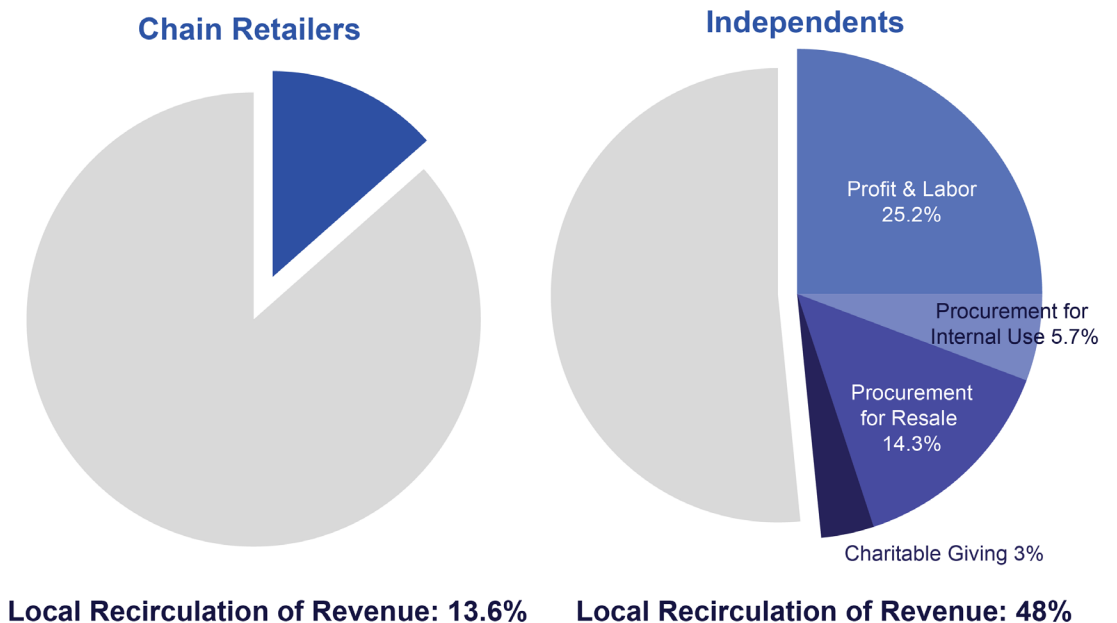
Exogenous structure leads to a loss of revenue to the community



# Chain vs Local

- Studies have shown that chain retailers like Target recirculate an average of only 14% of their revenue to the communities in which they reside.
- This means that 86 cents of every dollar you spend at Target is removed from your neighborhood.

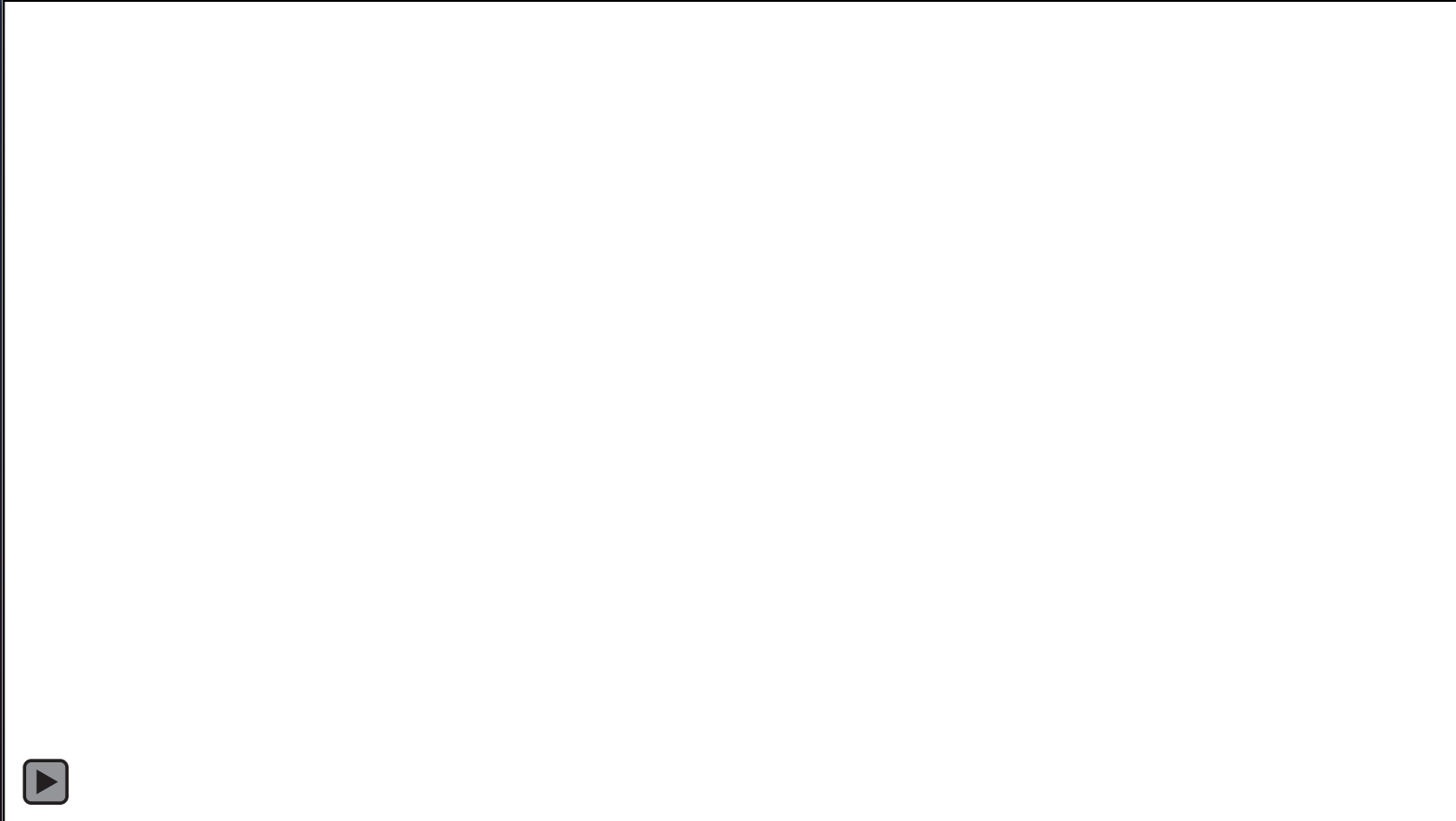
## Local Economic Return of Indies v. Chains



\*Compiled results from nine studies by Civic Economics, 2012: [www.civiceconomics.com](http://www.civiceconomics.com)  
Graph by American Independent Business Alliance: [AMIBA.net](http://AMIBA.net)



# Documentary – “The Local Shift”





# Potential Problems

---

The current system of the Raleigh Flea Market is counter to what most modern consumers expect in a shopping experience, which may be alienating many potential customers.

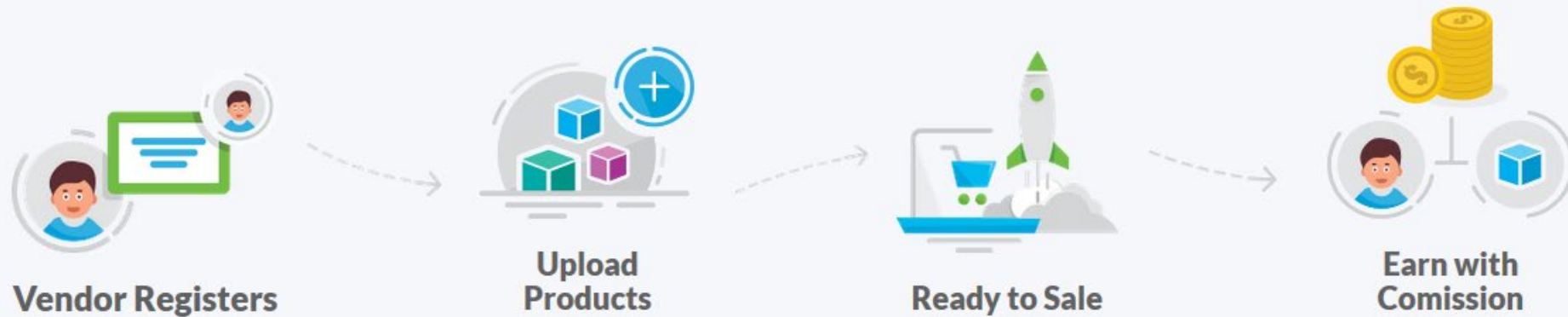
- Limited weekend hours restrict access to the market
- The unpredictable nature of the market makes it difficult to locate specific items
- The physical requirements make it difficult for vendors to sell many items



How can the Flea Market  
retain its traditional  
structure, yet expand to  
connect with modern  
shoppers?

# Multi-Vendor Online Marketplace

How it works?





# Multi-Vendor Online Marketplace

## Wordpress with Dokan

<https://wedevs.com/dokan/>  
<http://dokandemo.wedevs.com/>

**Cost:** \$500/yr

Allows vendors to create their own “stores” and manage their inventory through personal dashboards

- Vendors can create coupons & discounts, and monitor earning reports
- Buyers can leave reviews

The screenshot displays the Raleigh Flea Market website, which is a multi-vendor online marketplace. The header includes social media links, a shopping cart showing \$0.00, and user options for login and sign up. A navigation menu lists Home, All Products, Vendors, Documentation, Buy Now, and Video Tutorial, along with a search bar. The main content area features a 'Top Rated Product' list on the left, a product detail view for 'Happy Ninja' in the center, and a 'Vendor Information' section at the bottom. The 'Happy Ninja' product is a steampunk-style top hat with goggles, priced at \$35.00, with 2 customer reviews. The vendor information for 'Asutin' is also visible.

**Top Rated Product**

Ninja Silhouette	\$20.00	
Happy Ninja	\$18.00	
Woo Ninja	\$35.00	
Ninja Silhouette	\$35.00	
Woo Album #4	\$9.00	

Home > Clothing > Hoodies > Happy Ninja

**Happy Ninja**

★★★★☆ (2 customer reviews)

**\$35.00**

Pellentesque habitant morbi tristique senectus et netus et malesuada fames ac turpis egestas. Vestibulum tortor quam, feugiat vitae, ultricies eget, tempor sit amet, ante. Donec eu libero sit amet quam egestas semper. Aenean ultricies mi vitae est. Mauris placerat eleifend leo.

1

Categories: **Clothing, Hoodies**

**Vendor Information**

Store Name: Asutin  
Vendor: Fredric Patrick  
Address: Doherty Hall, Pittsburgh, PA 15213, USA  
Pittsburgh, PA 15213  
United States (US)  
No ratings found yet!

Related products

# Multi-Vendor Online Marketplace

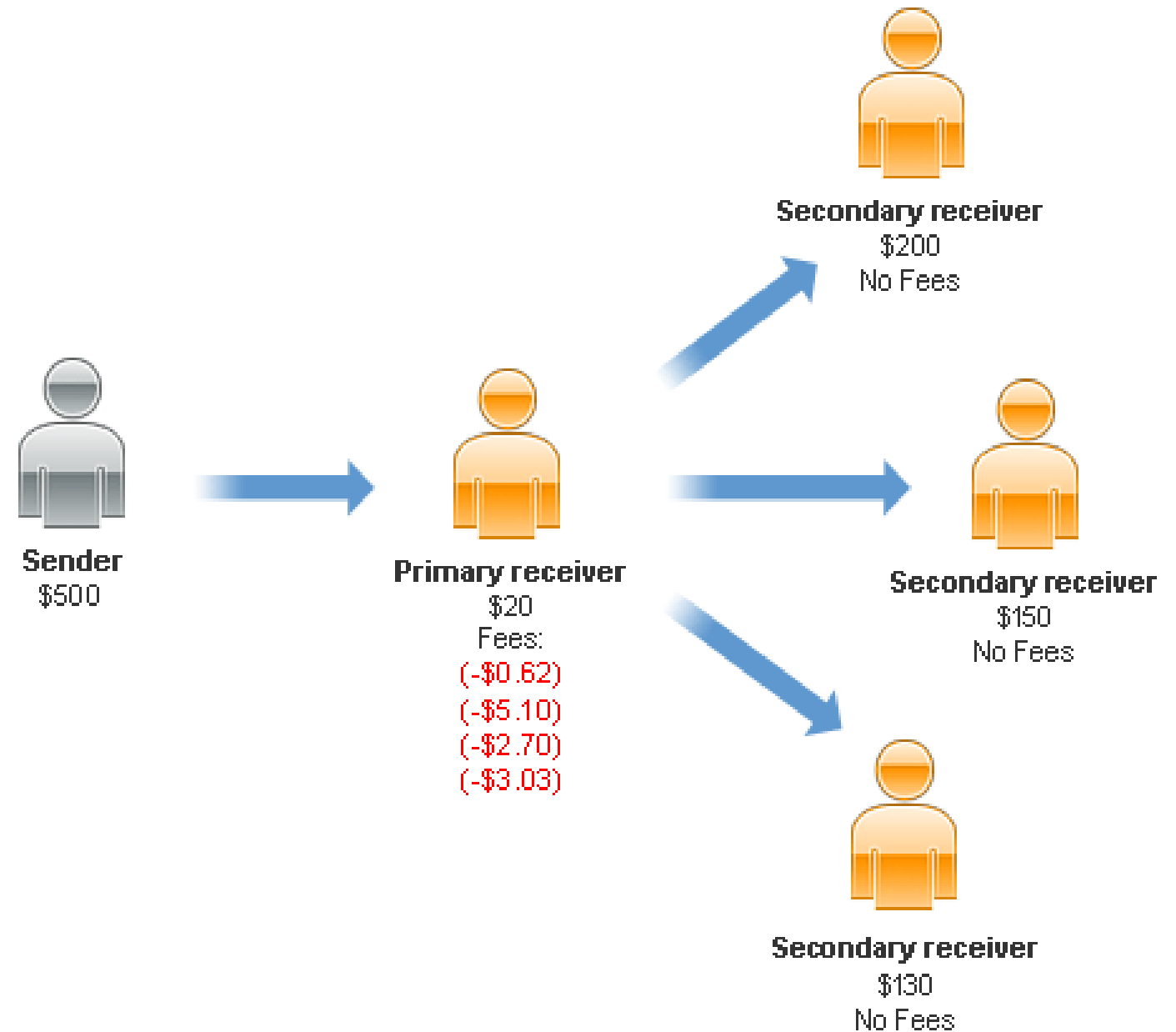
## Payment Forms

- **PayPal Adaptive Chained Payments**

Buyers send a single payment to a primary Raleigh Flea Market account. The primary account can choose to keep a commission, then pay the remainder to the vendors

- **Cash**

Option to choose cash on delivery, where buyers could go to the market during regular hours to purchase the selected item with cash.





# Rebranding

---

Part of the problem of connecting with younger customers is the belief that the Flea Market is only for antiques and cheap items.

Rebranding would:

- Raise awareness of the benefits of shopping local
- Show the market as a place to connect with local entrepreneurs

If this rebranding pulls in new customers and then those customers discover a convenient, accessible local marketplace, the Flea Market can increase traffic and, as a result, increasing the quality of vendors (an upward spiral).



# Final Thoughts

---

- If the market fails to find a way to connect with younger generations and changing consumer demands, it may fail altogether.
- It is imperative that it survives, or else we risk losing our local culture and commerce to the continuum of disposable, exogenous consumerism.

