

# **Empowering Minority-Owned Businesses Through Digital Transformation**

## **1. Executive Summary**

The Minority Owned Business Directory is a digital marketplace designed to support and empower minority-owned businesses by providing a platform for them to list, sell, and grow their businesses. It serves as a one-stop solution where businesses can showcase their products and services while customers can seamlessly discover, purchase, and book services.

This document outlines the high-level and low-level features of the platform, detailing its business model, functionality, and revenue streams to ensure a successful and scalable implementation.

## **2. High-Level Features**

### **For Vendors (Business Owners):**

#### **1. Business Listing & Profile Management**

- Create and manage detailed business profiles (name, category, location, contact info, logo, etc.).
- Multi-location support for businesses operating in multiple areas.
- Upload business photos, promotional banners, and videos.
- Minority Category Dropdown: Select from predefined options (Asian, Black, Latino, Indigenous, etc.), which will be displayed in the business listing.
- Map integration for easy navigation.

#### **2. E-Commerce Integration**

- Sell products directly through the platform.
- Inventory, order, and payment management.
- Offer discounts, promotions, and loyalty programs.

#### **3. Service Booking System**

- Customers can book and pay for services (e.g., consultations, appointments, repairs).
- Businesses can set availability, pricing, and service duration.

- Automatic appointment reminders and confirmations.

#### **4. Subscription-Based Model**

- Vendors subscribe annually for platform access.
- Multiple subscription tiers (Basic, Standard, Premium) with increasing benefits.

#### **5. Marketing & Advertising Tools**

- Promote products/services/events via in-app ads.
- Send push notifications about offers, new arrivals, and updates.
- Featured business placements for premium users.

#### **6. Analytics Dashboard**

- Track sales, customer engagement, and service bookings.
- Insights into customer behaviour and preferences.

#### **7. Customer Reviews & Ratings**

- Collect and display customer feedback to build credibility.
- Ability to respond to customer reviews.

### **For Customers:**

#### **1. Search & Discovery**

- Find businesses, products, and services by category, location, or keyword.
- Filter businesses by minority type (Asian, Black, Latino, etc.).
- Filter results by ratings, price, distance, and availability.

#### **2. E-Commerce Shopping**

- Browse and purchase products from multiple vendors.
- Secure payment options (credit/debit cards, digital wallets).
- Order tracking and notifications.

#### **3. Service Booking & Management**

- Book and pay for services within the app.
- Receive automated reminders and confirmations.

#### **4. User Reviews & Ratings**

- Leave feedback on businesses, products, and services.
- Rate businesses using a star system.

#### **5. AI Chatbot Integration (NEW FEATURE)**

- AI-powered chatbot to assist customers with product and service inquiries.
- 24/7 automated responses for FAQs, order tracking, and booking assistance.
- Personalized recommendations based on user interactions.

#### **6. Personalized Recommendations**

- AI-driven suggestions based on browsing and purchasing behavior.

#### **7. Deals & Discounts**

- Access exclusive vendor promotions and loyalty programs.

#### **8. Favorites & Wish-lists**

- Save preferred businesses, products, and services.

#### **9. In-App Messaging (For Premium Vendors Only)**

- Customers can chat directly with businesses.

#### **10. Push Notifications**

- Receive updates on orders, promotions, and platform news.

#### **3. Low-Level Features**

##### **Vendor-Side Functionalities:**

##### **A. Business Registration & Profile Management**

- Sign-up via email, phone, or social media authentication.
- Profile verification via document submission.
- Multi-user access for business team members.
- Business description, address, contact details, website, and social media links.

- Minority Category Selection: Dropdown with options (Asian, Black, Latino, Indigenous, etc.), allowing businesses to specify their minority ownership status.

## **B. Product & Service Management**

- Add, edit, and delete product/service listings.
- Manage inventory levels and stock notifications.
- Set product pricing, discounts, and promotions.
- Offer variations in size, color, or other attributes.

## **C. Order & Payment Management**

- Accept online payments via multiple payment gateways.
- View and manage customer orders.
- Provide estimated delivery times and track shipments.

## **D. Subscription Plans & Monetization**

- Tiered subscription model: Basic, Standard, Premium.
- Auto-renewal and manual renewal options.
- Payment gateway integration for subscription fees.

## **E. Analytics Dashboard**

- Sales performance tracking.
- Customer engagement insights.
- Inventory and revenue reports.

## **F. Customer Reviews & Business Reputation**

- View, respond to, and report customer reviews.
- Request verified reviews from customers.

## **G. Advertising & Promotion Management**

- Create and launch targeted ads within the app.
- Track engagement and conversions from ads.
- Offer time-limited promotions and coupons.

## **Customer-Side Functionalities:**

### **A. AI Chatbot Integration**

- **Automated Customer Support:** Answer frequently asked questions (FAQs) on orders, bookings, and business inquiries.
- **Smart Recommendations:** Suggest businesses, products, and services based on user preferences.
- **Order & Booking Assistance:** Help users check order statuses, modify bookings, and track shipments.
- **Multi-Language Support:** Provide assistance in multiple languages.

### **B. Search & Filtering**

- Keyword-based business search.
- Filter businesses by minority type (Asian, Black, Latino, Indigenous, etc.).
- Category and location-based filtering.
- Price range, availability, and rating-based sorting.

### **C. Wishlist & Favorites**

- Save favorite products, businesses, and services.
- Receive notifications on discounts for saved items.

### **D. In-App Messaging & Notifications**

- Chat with premium vendors for inquiries.
- Receive order updates, promotions, and recommendations.

## **4. Revenue Model**

### **1. Vendor Subscriptions:**

- **Basic Plan:** \$99/year (standard listing, limited media).
- **Standard Plan:** \$299/year (enhanced visibility, ad options).
- **Premium Plan:** \$499/year (priority listing, unlimited media, advanced analytics).

### **2. Transaction Fees:**

- 2-5% commission on each product sale or service booking.

### **3. In-App Advertising:**

- Vendors pay for promoted listings, homepage features, and category sponsorships.

### **4. Premium Features for Customers:**

- \$9.99/year for ad-free browsing, exclusive discounts, and early access to deals.

### **Affiliate & Referral Program:**

- Vendors earn discounts on subscriptions for referring new businesses.

### **5. Conclusion**

The Minority Owned Business Directory is a comprehensive digital solution that supports minority entrepreneurs by providing visibility, sales opportunities, and engagement tools. The addition of an AI chatbot enhances customer experience, while the minority selection feature allows businesses to proudly showcase their identity, making it easier for customers to support diverse businesses.

#### **● Community and Engagement Educational Resources**

Provide resources to business owners on improving their skills (e.g., marketing, finance management).

Host workshops, webinars, and articles focused on business growth and empowerment.

#### **● Community Building Forums and Discussion Groups**

Spaces for business owners to network and collaborate.

Users can interact, discuss, and share experiences about businesses.

#### **● Virtual and In - person Events:**

Organise events to foster a sense of community and to showcase business offerings.

### **Feedback and Reviews**

- Collect feedback from users to improve app features and business profiles.
- Implement a mechanism for businesses to handle negative reviews professionally.