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## ~ FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE ~

## "The Lookout" Launches To Help Local Businesses Build Online Presence

Sioux Lookout, ON – The future of retail is changing rapidly. The COVID-19 pandemic sped up the need for businesses to invest in and create digital storefronts, and "The Lookout" is helping small businesses achieve this goal.

The Municipality of Sioux Lookout received several inquiries from home based businesses and small-medium enterprises searching for resources to assist with capacity building and COVID-19 recovery. It was these requests that established the vision to create a repository of small business resources to assist in the process of adaptation under the uncertainty of COVID-19.

With contributions from the Northwestern Ontario Innovation Centre, Patricia Area Community Endeavors, and the Municipality of Sioux Lookout, a virtual market hub has been designed and created to provide small and home based businesses with a stepping stone into the virtual world. The newly established Sioux Lookout Young Professionals Network (SLYPN) quickly embraced the vision of "The Lookout" and is currently working to position itself to become the website's designated home.

In today's market, and into the future, brick and mortar locations also need a strong online presence – including dedicated e-commerce websites. But not all small businesses have the ability to create this presence themselves. This is why we have established "The Lookout"! This capacity building project is intended to assist small and home based business owners navigate the resources that are available in the region to help grow their business ideas and create or develop an online identity. Although social media platforms, like Facebook and Instagram, can be a part of an online strategy, a dedicated website can help attain a greater vision by providing a brand specific experience, and joining "The Lookout" is the first step to a tailored online presence.

"The Lookout" is also intended to serve as a marketing platform – a centralized location for visitor and consumers to discover events and activities in the Sioux Lookout region and is an important tool to for creating an environment where businesses can grow and collaborate now and into the future. Let us support you in preparing for the future of both in-person and online retail through innovation and technology.

Register your business now, <a href="https://www.thelookout.ca/register-your-business/">https://www.thelookout.ca/register-your-business/</a>, and experience Hub of the North's small business community, and local and regional events at <a href="https://www.thelookout.ca">www.thelookout.ca</a>!

## For more information, please contact:

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