



How To Create A Marketing Plan For Any Crisis

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If you're like most business owners these days, the question of how to create a marketing plan to deal with a crisis like COVID has crossed your mind more than once.

And with good reason.

Business owners are navigating uncharted waters these days. The COVID pandemic threatens to cast even the best-run businesses onto rocky shoals.

Some may be tempted to throw their marketing plans overboard to save money.

Yet that's the last thing you should consider.

Here's why.

Over the past 100 years, [numerous studies have demonstrated](#) the need to maintain or increase marketing efforts during economic downturns.

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What today's business climate demands is a marketing plan that can not only help you survive a crisis but thrive in it.

CREATING A MARKETING PLAN FOR COVID AND BEYOND

Confronting this new reality requires a new marketing plan template. One that takes into account changes in customer behavior like what we're seeing with COVID mandates and recommendations.

REINVENTING YOUR MISSION TO MEET CHANGING CONDITIONS

Before you begin the marketing planning process, you need to take a fresh look at the mission of your business.

This may seem like a radical proposition, but it really isn't. All it requires is that you refocus on your core business function. Your core mission will serve as a touchstone for your business, allowing you to adjust marketing plans without straying from your core competency.

The goal is to take what you are already doing and reconfiguring it to accommodate the new norms of the marketplace.

A great example is how many area restaurants are now in the produce selling business. [Earls Kitchen + Bar in Somerville, MA](#), for example, is now selling produce like meat, fish, vegetables, and dairy products. The mission to provide food and beverages to the community is the same. The kind of food offered and the way it's delivered has changed to meet social distancing norms.

MONITOR THE MOOD OF THE MARKETPLACE

Use this time to take a step back and see how your customers have adjusted to the new norms of your business. In the case of Earl's, they decided to sell individual rolls of toilet paper. Not only did this add some humor to the situation, but it also signaled that management was in tune with their customer base.



Are you looking to transform your business in these challenging times?

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This is the time to keep abreast of how other leaders in your industry are adapting to meet changing customer expectations. Implementing a successful new approach to solve an industry problem will solidify your position as a thought leader and problem solver.

Monitoring the mood of the marketplace in an ongoing process that never truly ends. In a crisis, marketing adjustments also need to take into consideration events that are likely to transpire within the next 3-6 month window.

CHANGE YOUR MARKETING CONTENT TO REFLECT THE NEW REALITY

Messaging that was conceived months ago is unlikely to resonate with your customers and prospects today. In some instances, it may even come off as tone-deaf.

Presenting the wrong marketing message during a crisis can damage your brand and your bottom line. It can send an unintended message that you're indifferent at the very moment customers want to be heard.

Customers need to know that your business is adapting to help them solve their crises-related problems. They need to know you're there to provide a service they need.

People are looking for information now more than ever.

Providing tips for helping your target market navigate their new reality will convert them into fans. If you're a restaurant selling produce, for example, you might consider scheduling emails with recipes that use the produce you're selling. If you're an attorney, provide some information on how people can protect themselves from crisis-driven scams.

Don't make your customers and prospects feel abandoned at a time of crisis. Review all content and social media calendars and adjust accordingly. You'll win their loyalty and win the day.

BRIDGE THE QUARANTINE DIVIDE WITH DIGITAL COMMUNICATION

It's the question every business owner is asking: What's the best way to stay in contact with my existing customers and win over new ones in a time of social distancing?

Fortunately, the answer can be found in digital technology.

Now is the time to consider [webinars](#), [email campaigns](#), and social media platforms in untraditional ways.



[Jen Levin](#), a fish distributor in Portland, Maine, has shifted from distributing fish to area restaurants to selling direct to customers. A new section of her website is dedicated to online ordering and arranging for pick up. Across the country, restaurants selling produce are also driving sales by live streaming music, cooking segments, and mixology segments.

These technologies can help keep your existing customers engaged while providing a needed service to prospects desperate to find what you have to offer.

CONDUCT AN AUDIT OF YOUR MARKETING CHANNELS

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Use your downtime to evaluate the effectiveness of your marketing channels.

- Is your website slow?
- Does your digital marketing plan need an update?
- Do you need to replace elements within your marketing plan?

Once business begins to pick up again, it will be hard to find the time to address these issues.


NEED HELP? INTINK IS HERE FOR YOU!

As a business leader, you're a different breed than most. Fading quietly into the night in the face of adversity isn't in your DNA.

We get it. We're wired the same way.








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