

Why Now is Not the Time to Quarantine Your Marketing Plan



In uncertain times, and especially during a quarantine, people are spending more time than ever on the internet and social media and they are looking to make connections. Don't let your business get lost in the chaos. Even if your doors are not physically open, your customers are out there, and through creative marketing, you can stay top of mind.

Here are some ways to stay relevant, participate in the conversation (in a positive way!) and increase customer sentiment for your brand during the uncertainty...

Review your Online Presence.

Customers have more time to research and make informed business decisions – reading customer reviews, watching videos, etc. Make sure your website is ready for the traffic and extra time your customers may be spending on your site.

Here are 4 easy places to start:

- **Spruce up your website.** Start with your “about us” section – Is this up to date? This is the best place to tell your story. Humanize it and remember, stories stick. Skip the sterile business jargon here and tell an authentic story. From here, move to your customers’ “Frequently Asked Questions” and make sure your website answers them. And of course be sure your website reflects any changes in your business due to the quarantine.
- **Update your news, blog or home page.** Has it been awhile since you've posted? Your fans want to hear and learn from you! Tell them what you're up to, post a video – even if it is from your living room. Make sure you keep in mind who your audiences are.
- **Email your customers.** Focusing on your current customers is a great way to maximize your marketing spend. The cost of attracting a new customer can cost 6-7 times more than retaining existing customers. You can build more revenue by focusing on reaching out to your current client list through cross-sell, upselling, or other retention strategies.
- **Update your social media.** Go through and visit any posts you have on auto-schedule and make sure they are still appropriate. Some words or messages could be taken differently during times like this. Create new posts and participate in conversations about your brand in a meaningful way. An extra dose of positivity and kindness goes a long way right now.

Focus on Customer Service.

Even if you are not open for business at this time, customers may have questions.

- **Be available.** Answer questions through phone, chat, or video and make sure your customers know you care. Customers remember how you treat them and how you go above and beyond to help them, especially during a crisis. According to Nielsen, 92% of customers say they would trust a referral from friends or family. Businesses that go out of their way to make their customers feel good will get the marketing gold known as Word of Mouth Marketing.
- **New Customers.** Changes in the market may even bring you new customers. Ask yourself first who they might be. Then, even though there may be new opportunities for your prospects, conduct your outreach with a sensitivity to what they may be experiencing, such as working from home with children, etc. In addition to nurturing new relationships and customers, your outreach marketing raises the awareness of your business for when the tides turn.

Keep it Positive.

There is enough information about COVID-19 itself. You can talk about how it affects you or how you are helping, but don't contribute to the fear and uncertainty by posting statistics or scaring your customers.

- **Focus on the positive.** Do something to help if you can. Stories like people sewing masks for healthcare workers or reading stories for kids stuck at home are heartwarming, and these are the messages that get shared, and remembered.
- **Be the floral flour sack.** During the great depression, desperate times turned to desperate measures and it became popular to re-purpose cotton flour sacks to make clothing for children, dishcloths, or diapers. Flour manufacturers caught on and started distributing their flour in colorful sacks, often in a bright floral print. What can your brand do to spread joy?
- **Don't Retreat.** We know these are uncertain times, and your business has likely been disrupted in a major way. Now is not the time to retreat. Consider how thoughtfully focusing on your marketing strategy and messaging during this turbulence can increase your brand sentiment and poised your business for growth as soon as the world returns to normal.

