



A COMMUNICATIONS GUIDE FOR
HEALTH & WELLBEING
BRANDS IN THE CURRENT
CRISIS AND BEYOND

Digital. Social. PR. Content. Crisis Communications.

INSIGHTS • FACT SHEETS • CHECK LISTS

Let's face it, we are all in uncharted territory. This reminds us of the GFC on steroids – with the added complexity of self-isolation – hammering our economy.

CEO LETTER

COLLEAGUES,

Echoes of the GFC to the nth degree abound as we traverse the daily evolution of Covid-19 with high-impact messages pounding us by the minute. Now with a mandated lockdown, the escalation of the economic (and emotional) impact will surely eclipse the tragedy of the mounting deaths. The question is, how do our Health & Wellbeing brands best navigate these times?

Navigation is impossible without a True North, a direction or destination which we steer towards even when the storms obscure it. When you can't see more than a few feet in front of your nose, that's when you most need to know where you're going – your company's purpose.

With your purpose in mind if not in sight, it's time for a sharp pivot to digital and then calmly, steadily, one careful step at a time, firstly with survival in mind for the short term and then a return to long-term brand sustainability. All this, when audiences are deeply anxious, shutting off spend, as many find themselves facing redundancy.

During my 34-years in media and communications, history has shown us that these times do pass, but it is how we navigate them in the moment that truly counts.

HEALTH & WELLBEING COMMUNICATIONS AT THE FOREFRONT OF THIS CRISIS

Health & Wellbeing products and services are in demand overdrive, BUT audience accessibility has been restricted, resulting in frustration and an escalation in anxiety. This coupled with the angst of a failing economy presents a new audience mindset never seen on such scale before.

The question is, how do we as Health & Wellbeing brands traverse this current crisis into the next 'twilight' stage and beyond, surviving and thriving? We need to ensure we are sensitive to current audience sentiments – fear, anxiety, helplessness – with not only the physical challenges but also the sudden social change to self-isolation, coupled with the impending economic disaster. We need to evolve in a fast, agile digitally-led way.

As an agency renowned for deep commitment to our clients, always going above and beyond in good times and bad, coupled with a sensitive and successful approach to Health & Wellbeing creative communications, we stand with you during this challenging journey - no matter if you're a retailer, brandholder, raw material supplier, organic food grower or healthcare practitioner, ready to assess, strategise and act decisively, affordably and at pace.

Here is a communications guide to help you through this crisis and beyond, in order to survive AND thrive. Fact sheets; Guides; Top Actions to Take across Audience. Digital. Social. PR. Crisis Communications. Tech.

As always, we are here for you, day or night.

In good health



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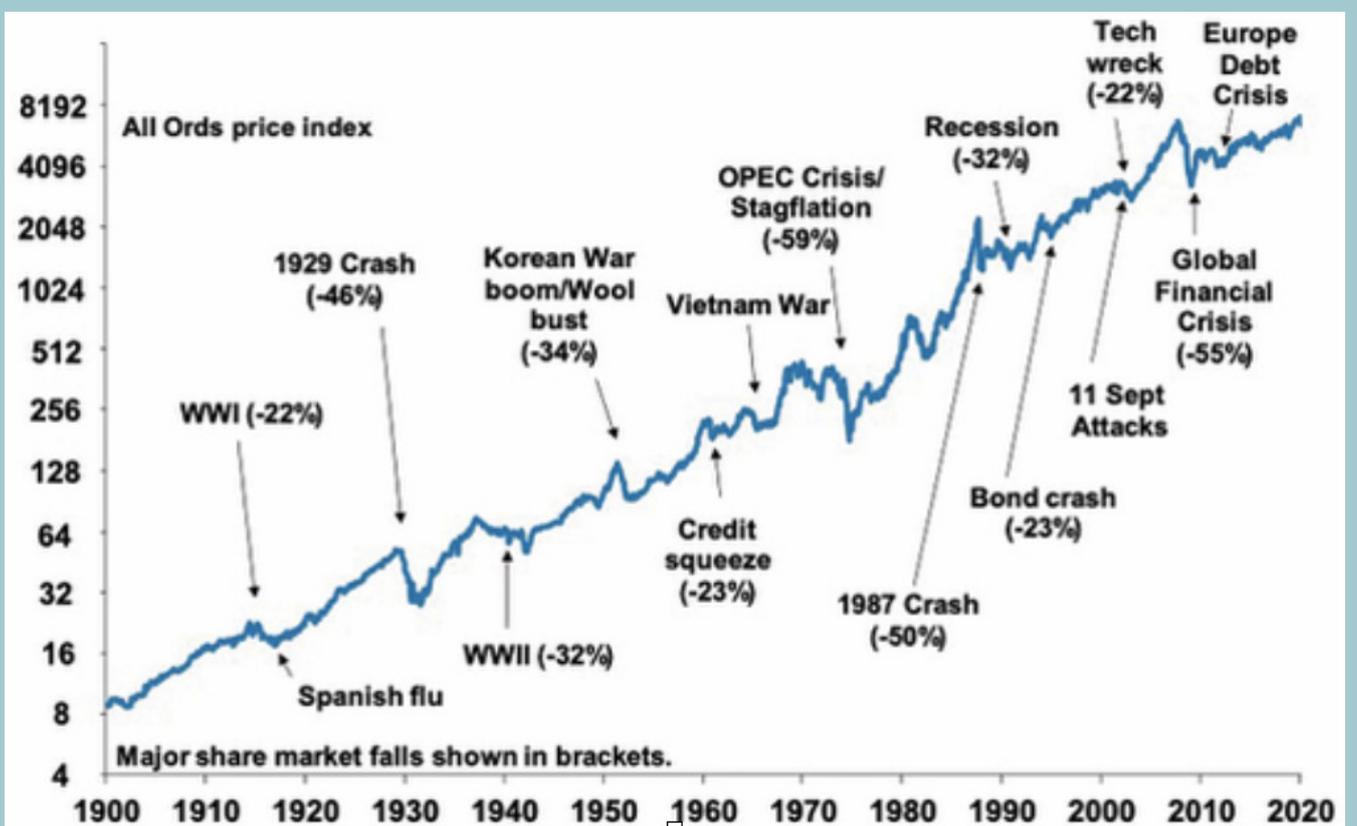
“Do what you can, with what you have, where you are”
-Theodore Roosevelt

HINDSIGHT IS 20/20

This is not business as usual. But historically, long after seismic events come solid periods of strong economic growth, including a realignment of regulations in disease control and health practices.

With jobs and marketing budgets set to slash, the absolute key is to **KEEP COMMUNICATING WITH YOUR AUDIENCE, STAYING CLOSE BY THEIR SIDE IN A TIME OF NEED, AND FIND MORE MOMENTS WHERE THEIR NEEDS, YOUR CAPABILITY AND YOUR PURPOSE COINCIDE.**

There are great opportunities to share assurances from those at the front lines in the health industry. Develop strategies to deliver valuable communications with relevance and creativity which help reframe audience thinking and mindset, providing Health & Wellbeing educational knowledge, hope and inspiration. Assess your content strategies to pivot towards the real needs of your audience. And, if they are not relevant for your positioning, engage in partnerships.



**“PANIC CAUSES
TUNNEL VISION.
CALM ACCEPTANCE
OF DANGER ALLOWS
US TO MORE
EASILY ASSESS THE
SITUATION AND SEE
THE OPTIONS.”**

SIMON SINEK

HEALTH & WELLBEING SECTOR LEADERSHIP ARRIVES

AT THE CENTRE OF ALL OF THESE CHALLENGES LIES THE HEALTH & WELLBEING INDUSTRY, THE VERY ESSENCE OF WHAT WE ARE TRYING TO FIX, OR AT THE VERY LEAST PROTECT, IN THIS COVID-19 PANDEMIC – BODY AND MIND.

The industry's moment of leadership has arrived, be it a manufacturer, raw material supplier, VMS (Practitioner or OTC), retailer, nutrition, home care, personal care or other brand, which supports the Health & Wellbeing of Australians.

DURING THIS TIME OF 'CRISIS' WE MUST FIND BALLAST BETWEEN VESSEL, CARGO AND DEEP WATERS WITH THREE KEY CONSIDERATIONS TO BRING STABILITY:

AUDIENCE EMPATHY

+

BRAND PURPOSE

+

AGILE MARKETING

THE COVID-19 BUSINESS (R)EVOLUTION IN PLAY

BUSINESS CHANGES

Harvard Business School leaders suggest in *Rewriting the Future of Business*, authored by Dina Gerdeman (16 March 2020), that the long-term impact of Covid-19 will have far reaching implications for business:

- Remote work will become a strategic necessity
- Technology will be relied on more than ever
- Organisations will develop trust-based cultures with their employees
- Businesses will empower customers to become more helpful
- Leadership will engage people to work more creatively together
- Supply chain managers will suddenly have a much more difficult job, strategy will be rewritten
- The best leaders will break out of silos and improve workplace culture
- Employees and buildings will be healthier
- In-person meetings will be less important
- Employees will take stock of their work priorities

AUDIENCE BEHAVIOUR CHANGES

- Anxiety about their Health & Wellbeing
- Deep concern about finances and employment
- Reduction in spending in non-essential buys
- Avoidance of non-essential store visits
- Acceleration in work-from-home
- Defining a work-life-balance at home
- Increased use of technology, including by seniors

Where does your business or organisation stand in relation to these very realistic insights? Will Covid-19 be the tipping point in workplaces for a revolution in how we work, shop, learn and live? And importantly, how we communicate?

HEALTH & WELLBEING TRENDS OF NOTE

● PRODUCTS

Gut health, immune support, pain relief, stress, sleep and anxiety supplementation are front and centre and will continue to escalate.

● SERVICES

Allied Health Care will move to mobile dispatch, for 1:1 delivery as will personal care services, as much as feasible.

● HEALTH TESTING

Home kit testing available to the masses will become available at a rapid rate, empowering communities.

● PRACTITIONER HEALTH ALERTS

Realtime alert systems that grant busy doctors & pharmacists access to the latest updates on Covid-19 without needing to leave normal workflows.

● PHYSICAL

Exercise in isolation will be a priority while gym visits suffer, with messages & methods to keep “gymming” at home will rise. Para-social alternatives like video connections for exercise, lifestyle and mental health strategies will emerge on new and existing platforms.

● MENTAL WELLBEING

Online and phone support services will grow from practitioners to pharmacies and other retailers; new online leisure channels and delivery (free entertainment, special interest clubs) will deliver DIY productions for webinars, live feeds and video engagement.

● HOME HYGIENE

Spotlight on cleaning products and regimens with elevated permission to enter the Health & Wellbeing discussion. Resurgence of natural product interest is certain, whilst in isolation decluttering and recycling will accelerate.

● FOOD REVOLUTION

Look out for a surge in new-age products (non-dairy, non-meat), home-propagation (vegetable gardens, chickens, yoghurt) and accelerated move to organic produce.

● TECH

Digitisation & increased automation of health care will improve patient care and operation of medical facilities and pharmacies. Tele-health and tele-conferencing supported by 5G will accelerate delivery by health care practitioners, pharmacists and allied health.

● CONNECTING HEALTH-CARE PROVIDERS

Improved integration of multiple healthcare providers per person accelerating integrative medicine and preventative healthcare.

● SMART SOCIAL

People joining social platforms services en-masse to stay connected to family, friends and work, as well as to access Health & Wellbeing content and updates.

● VIDEO CONFERENCING

For businesses as well as self-isolated individuals to connect with one another and with healthcare practitioners, to ensure continuity in daily life and connection.

● AGILE DIGITAL

Digital innovation for testing, screening & counselling will provide adjunct support to healthcare practitioners, pharmacists and allied health professionals to provide improved healthcare management.

● VIRTUAL EVENTS

Health & Wellbeing education and inspiration online to inform and motivate will accelerate.

● CASHLESS PAYMENTS

WHO is encouraging people to pay cashlessly for health reasons, enabling retailers to gather data and accelerate into personalised Health & Wellbeing communications.

● DIGITAL DELIVERY SERVICES

Retailers including pharmacies will accelerate e-commerce bills, with enhanced data acquisition capabilities for improved personalised marketing.

KEY MARKETING ACTIONS

1. MAINTAIN YOUR MARKETING BUDGET

When the economy is in crisis, brands usually take from marketing first! Learn from history – those who stay talking through a downturn are the ones who usually flourish in the upturn. This is the time to review and recalibrate your marketing strategy to establish a distinctive narrative to take you through this crisis and beyond in good brand health. Now more than ever, Health & Wellbeing brands have the authority to talk relevantly and loudly. Talk with your agency about smart ways to PRIORITISE where to spend your time and money. Make sure they negotiate on price and deliver lean and fast.

2. FOCUS ON SUPPORTING YOUR EXISTING CUSTOMERS

Remember, out of sight means out of mind. Make sure you stay in touch with your audiences – be they practitioners with education support or consumers with a multitude of challenges – physical, emotional and economic – email, text, social, eDMs, WhatsApp, with RELEVANT personalised messaging; understanding their current state of mind – connect with PURPOSE and SENSITIVITY. Use all digital channels to communicate – webinars, podcasts and more. Health & Wellbeing has clear permission to have a strong voice in this time, simply put, connect with people.

3. KEEP A TRACK OF EVERYTHING

These days digital allows us to track virtually every move, sentiment and more of our customers. Use website analytics like Google Analytics, and if you don't know how, ask us. Make sure you track data daily to ensure you know what information and activities you need to dial up or down. Digital enables lean, smart analysis. But remember, data is only as useful as the actions it informs. If you're not getting data you can act on, look elsewhere. Avoid reporting for reporting's sake.

4. REDISCOVER YOUR PURPOSE – DO NOT SELL

Now is the time to support and not sell. Audiences are in need of guidance and companionship in navigating these troubling times. The role of purpose in a business tends to wax and wane – when times are good, it can easily become ignored. In challenging times a clear purpose (beyond sales) is imperative and will help inform all your communications and activities keeping them consistent with each other and relevant to your audience. This is important not just for your external communications but to give your internal team direction and inspiration.

5. A CHANNEL AUDIT

A swift channel audit is required to move to online effectively - social media, website UX, e commerce, capability and online listening is now a business imperative. Which channels are impactful? Which are effective for your needs? Which content is resonating? What is working and what is not?

6. YOU WILL MAKE MISTAKES – THAT'S OK

In a fast fluid environment, one needs to have a test-and learn-mentality. Be smart, agile and creative and keep stress-testing the work against the objectives of the moment. Content that works this week might not work the next – be prepared to evolve. If it works, great; if not, learn and move on. Don't be afraid to experiment, if you have the appetite for smart, quick decision-making. Your agency should guide you through this. Remember to always keep up to date with regulatory requirements – ACCC, CMA, Pharmacy Guild and other bodies are regularly releasing updates on what is deemed to be relevant communication.

COMMUNICATIONS FOCUS FOR NOW

Right now, our communications focus needs to move swiftly to the following:

GET CLOSE TO YOUR AUDIENCE

- **LISTEN, SHARE, ACT** – use social listening tools such as Sprout, Radian 6, etc., to understand what engages them, what they want more of, less of, what is making them fearful, seek feedback proactively.
- **SOCIAL AND DIGITAL CONTENT** – which connects with them with relevance, authenticity and empathy and a touch of joy, as is relevant – educational, entertainment, informative.
- **RECOGNISABLE PURPOSE** – your organisation exists for some reason other than just making money, so let that purpose inform how you offer value beyond just what you sell – is it keeping them healthy? Or enabling them to become mobile again? Whatever it is, weave purpose now into your narrative.
- **COMMUNITY MANAGEMENT** – to ensure we listen, hear, tap every opportunity to connect at a deeper level for long-term relationship building, ensuring we don't take the place of qualified practitioners unless we are truly qualified. Make sure you have the best credentials on your team.

TALKING WITH YOUR EMPLOYEES

- Employee engagement and management at this time is absolutely crucial in order to maintain business capability. Get a clear plan in place. Any gaps in communication leads to questioning of leadership through this crisis and erodes confidence with disastrous knock-on effects. Keep in view the emerging crisis is more mental than physical and employee assistance should be on tap.
- If your organisation's purpose has been conveyed to your team in the past, now is the time to remind them – if you do more than just sell things, your team will be working for more than just pay, but remember that you can never expect more commitment to the cause from them than you demonstrate yourself!
- Digital activities which enable leaders to

continue to connect and inspire to drive productivity and engagement.

- Do all of this regularly. Check in on the wellbeing of your team. The situation is changing every day, so you need to be addressing it every day, even if it just takes a few minutes. Your True North helps keep the team on track, yes, but they need to know that someone has their hand on the steering wheel!

TALKING WITH YOUR EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS SUCH AS SUPPLY CHAIN PARTNERS

- A corporate communications framework to harness the power of the supply chain evolution, is now required on a deeper than ever level. With the China shutdown, we experienced an unhealthy dependence on one major superpower supplier.
- **HEALTH & WELLBEING** fits largely into 'essential' products and services. Pressure on manufacturers and other supply chain partners is higher than ever. Keep them close and nurture those relationships – in a time of need, they will support you fast. Maintaining solid supplier partnerships has become even more critical during this time.

CRISIS AND REPUTATION MANAGEMENT

- Corporate communications responses require careful planning at the best of times, most of all in a time of crisis to ensure the business reputation remains intact. Media (and government) are watching closely to ensure that safety and fairness are on top of the agenda.
- Ensure you have a solid Crisis Plan in place so that if required you are well prepared. Our team of leading communications professionals across health, wellbeing and corporate reputation are at the ready to plan, implement and support, across traditional and social media channels.

DO THIS NOW THE 6AM GUIDE TO MARKETING IN A DOWNTURN

1. MAXIMISE YOUR WEB TRAFFIC

KEEP YOUR WEB PRESENCE UP TO DATE, RELEVANT AND HELPFUL

When audiences are seeking out information, products & services relevant to company's value purpose, proposition and brand, you want to show that you have something to say and/or something offer which is relevant today, not yesterday.

- Update the Homepage Hero with some key imagery and messaging that communicates empathy for this unprecedented time.
- Review your SEM keywords and consider pausing activity which is irrelevant to Covid-19 audiences (e.g. pushing to bricks and mortar when quarantine is common).
- Emphasise your delivery options if you have them, and upweight delivery-related SEM activity.
- If you have a blog, use it, update it daily to help educate AND drive SEO – let readers know that you understand how they're feeling, what they're doing, and what value you have to offer, ideally guided by your purpose.
- Add a FAQ section which will help reduce the need for individualised responses, inform and drive SEO.
- Ensure the digital support channels you offer are highly accessible to the customer - including live chat, chatbots, social, email and phone.

2. CREATE TARGETED LANDING PAGES

LANDING PAGES HAVE HIGHER CONVERSION RATES THAN THE PARENT WEBSITE AS THEY'RE HIGHLY TARGETED

- Landing pages give you the ability to focus on the key messages and branded styles from what brought the audience to the landing page to start with.
- Ensure there are strong CTA's on all of your communications. This will entice your audience to click-through for more information from your social post, eDMs.
- During this unique, challenging and unprecedented time, Landing Pages are more important than ever and should be used to communicate the right messages, based on the times that we're now living in. The right messaging tone, imagery and colour-schemes need to be thought out with a creative strategy.

3. UPWEIGHT SOCIAL MEDIA ACTIVITY

KEEP THE CONVERSATION GOING

Audiences will spend (even!) more time on social media as other options for entertainment and attention are restricted. If you have a community, engage with it. If you create content, build it around an emotional or functional need in your audience.

- Conversations start with listening – pay attention to what your customers are saying, joking about, complaining about, asking about... Identify their needs.
- Create content quickly, but always with an emotional or functional need in mind – watch for which messages gain traction and allocate budget to amplifying their reach.
- The sweet spot is meeting emotional or functional needs with value that aligns with your brand's purpose.
- Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn and TikTok deliver outstanding platforms to engage with niche (and mass) audiences.
- Consider working with influencers and social platforms which drive reach and engagement to create UGC (i.e. Instagram, TikTok) – influencers are going through exactly what your audiences are going through, and this authenticity will come through in their content.

4. OFFER VALUE THROUGH CONTENT

Give audiences something useful (or joyful).

People have a need for useful informative and instructional content. Your brand has a need for being seen as authoritative and helpful. It's a match made in heaven, as long as you stick to topics you have a right to play in. Pet food brands can give advice on viruses transmitted by cats and dogs; banks probably shouldn't.

- Educate with content that delivers a value exchange with the audience.
- Incorporate fast stack written, creative and video content in your strategy.
- Use infographics to visualise data, knowledge & trends – food swaps, exercise swaps and mental health techniques to calm the mind.
- Deliver content that presents you as a trusted

partner on this rollercoaster journey, e.g. how to keep steady in business, if marketing to small business owners; how to take care of your health at home, if a cleaning brand.

- Talk about what matters to your customers!

Deliver a value exchange – be it about product ingredients, heritage, sustainability, purpose – inspire.

5. CREATIVE STORYTELLING

With all focus on social and digital, thumb-stopping creativity which is distinctive for the brand, is now more important than ever. This does not mean it needs to be at a high cost, in fact fast, affordable creative content is high on the agenda. Stress test your creative against your brand strategy, essence, values, purpose and products, and ensure that all creative is aligned across all channels and all assets. Dynamic creative content including video and animation etc works hard to attract the eye of audiences, engage, as well as supporting search engine optimisation and favour by the likes of Instagram and Facebook. Use creative content for education e.g. key opinion leader information sharing or education, entertainment and overall brand storytelling. Remember to keep stress testing your content to make sure it's resonating with the audience.

6. CAPTURE LEAD GENERATION OPPORTUNITIES

If you can't sell today, sell tomorrow. Consumers are tightening their belts and purse strings, but they will likely be digitally window-shopping more than ever. Make sure you have mechanisms in place to capture their interest to follow up and convert later post-pandemic.

- Audiences will respond positively to the promise of doing something later – it reminds them that current hardships are temporary.
- Ensure you have lead-generation CTA's and analytics tracking on your website.
- If sales conversions start to stagnate, shift some budget into lead-generation activity (for example, on social channels).

7. GROWTH-HACK THROUGH PARTNERSHIPS

Interesting times make for strange bedfellows. Uncertainty, anxiety, restrictions, concern for others – these psychographics create new segments which are being targeted by other businesses you might not have had much in common with before. Think about who else might be able to meet complementary audience needs alongside you to create a partnership that's mutually beneficial.

- Partner with brands to align databases and leverage your combined reach – food delivery service

with an immune support section?

- Leverage their traditional audiences with a narrative that speaks to shared values between both brands.
- Enjoy (and offer) credibility and authority by association.

8. REWARD YOUR CUSTOMER

What better time to surprise and delight? If immediate sales are slowing down, alongside investing in lead generation, it may be a good time to invest in goodwill. Think outside the price promotion box in terms of what you can offer. But keep talkability in mind too – a few acts of surprise and delight can turn into a whole audience.

- Partner with another brand/company to provide packaged offers, making sure it aligns with your purpose.
- Take this opportunity to recognise your longest-standing customers, with a handwritten note when delivering e-commerce, or with tech delivery.
- Secure an uplifting prize and deliver it in an interesting way.
- Think of digital surprise and delight vouchers to redeem when business is back to normal.
- Make the experience shareable.
- Ensure your loyalty strategy is right so the customer will come back and will refer to their friends.

9. IMPROVE YOUR CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

Take those CX questions and projects off the backburner. For many categories, even some in Health & Wellbeing, Covid-19 might mean a drop in consumer spending which decreases all sales ROI spend. For some businesses, this means a need to work smarter or work harder, with more marketing investment. But for businesses that are positioned to take a hit on sales, that reduced ROI could be an opportunity to invest in CX.

- Innovate at multiple touchpoints – how about launching an online immunometer? Or an online tracker for your temperature.
- Examine and improve delivery systems – fast delivery is key to supporting your audience in this time.
- Greet better – what kind of first impression do you want to make? If you can't improve the functional value of your customer experience (faster, simpler, easier), tap into your purpose and improve the emotional value (surprise and delight!).
- Are there inefficiencies which could be ironed out to yield greater results when the market bounces back?
- Go through those years of NPS open-ended answers you never thought you'd get around to reading – what do your customers hate and love about your customer experience?

CHECKLIST : TO MANAGING COMMUNICATIONS THROUGH A CRISIS

✓ DO

Alert Regulatory Affairs Immediately

Enlist all company stakeholders

Pull the trigger on your crisis plan

Assess what you can do yourself and what you can delegate

Find out the facts and connect with authorities

Monitor social and traditional media closely

Understand the scope of the issue and assess the critical decisions

Issue a "holding statement" ASAP

Think through every word

Put people first. Review messaging with sensitivity

Correct any errors of fact that are already public

✗ DON'T

Lie, Disappear or Overreact

Forget to include all stakeholders from the beginning

Issue a denial until you have all the facts

Minimise the situation

Make a joke about the crisis

Say "we are taking the matter seriously"

Repeat the problem or accusation in your statement

Let your fears of liability trump your humanity

Speculate until you understand the facts

Be only inwardly-focused

CHECKLIST : MARKETING CONSIDERATIONS FOR RECOVERY

YOUR INDUSTRY'S NEW NORMAL

- What has changed?
- Have there been regulatory updates?
- What changes will influence your success?
- What activities should you prioritise / de-prioritise?

YOUR AUDIENCE'S BEHAVIOUR CHANGES

- What are they?
- What do you need to evolve to meet their needs?
- What change is required in the short (0-3 months), medium (3-6 months) and long-term (6 months +)?

YOUR BRAND EXPRESSION

- Is the look, feel & tone relevant for the new normal approaching?
- What needs to be strengthened or evolved?

YOUR KEY MESSAGING

- What brand messages require updating?
- Is purpose woven into your brand storytelling?
- Do your communications inspire community?

YOUR CONTENT

- Is your content distinctive and does it reflect your brand positioning?
- Does your content activate your purpose?
- Is your content providing a value exchange for the audience?
- Is the creative helping drive engagement?
- Is your content sufficiently dynamic? e.g. video, animations etc.

YOUR CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

- Does your in-store experience require evolution to meet changed audience behaviours?
- Does the customer experience need to evolve to online experiential?

YOUR ONLINE CHANNELS

- Do you have effective digital and social platforms?
- Evaluate reach, engagement and connection
- Does your e-commerce platform deliver effectively?



TAKING NEXT STEPS

If you would like to talk about driving communications through a downturn and into the new normal, we are here to help 24/7.

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