

BE FELT: COMMUNICATING THROUGH THE COVID-19 CRISIS



Beyond the health and social costs, the coronavirus pandemic is actually wreaking serious and lasting damage on businesses and the world's economy.

Yet it also offers an opportunity. Stratworks believes the current crisis can be a proving ground for the depth and strength of a brand's relationship with its publics.

There is no arguing the fact that business survival must be ensured

and enterprises must intensify efforts to guarantee continuity. Product push is necessarily limited now. It may even seem inordinate and misaligned with consumers' pressing needs and unsettled moods. Logic and instincts point to just lay low and ride it out, to hold back on Marketing Communications and PR expenses. Or is this instead, a rare and unique chance to invest in meaningful engagement with your publics?

There are 2 principles that recommend themselves for these times:

1. Communicate Now – With Empathy And Through Action.

Be heard.

More than ever, consumers need to hear from, and about, the brands and institutions that they trust.

Brand voice will resonate better thru authentic empathy with people's needs and cares. USP and SMP will always sell. Products can always compete on specific uses and benefits. Brands stand on personifying values and roles they play in peoples' lives.

JOLLIBEE DONATES P100-M WORTH OF FOOD TO FRONTLINERS



Be felt.

Put people at the core of the business. Demonstrate concern for internal stakeholders, associates and employees. This is the touchstone of the sincerity of intent. Then broaden these efforts to directly and helpfully address urgent public needs and concerns. When matched with a brand's specific equity or company's core competency, these will not only expand the brand footprint but deeply etch it in the psyche of the market.

Top five things to consider:

- 1 Show how you're providing resources, education and support to your employees and customers.
- 2 Embrace your leadership role and provide consistent updates on your progress and also share your business continuity plan.
- 3 Leverage your media partners by providing tips and insights into what you're seeing in the market.
- 4 Using the right tone and posture, maintain, if not increase, your presence using trusted local media platforms.
- 5 Check your pre-scheduled social media posts. Make sure they match the tone of the current environment.

Jeff Leo Herrmann
--Marketing Your Business During the Coronavirus

<https://businessjournaldaily.com/marketing-your-business-during-the-coronavirus-crisis/>

Try to help.

Businesses that take action to help those affected by the crisis will connect with their audience on a deeper level. People want to do business with brands who genuinely care.

- Set up a relief fund for those affected by the crisis.
- Create educational content that will help your audience understand the crisis.
- Discount your product or service or give it away for free.
- Use your product or service to help people suffering from the crisis.

Liz Willitz -- 8-Step Guide to Email Marketing During a Crisis

<https://www.business2community.com/brandviews/aweber/8-step-guide-to-email-marketing-during-a-crisis-02293338>

Be cohesive.

There are always legal snags, maybe even more in crisis. Public-benefitting programs can bog down in logistics or inefficiencies. And your programs grow in impact only when suitably amplified. Assemble an integrated body composed of communications, legal and operations teams to steer a unified course.

Achieving the close orchestration needed between the communications, legal and operational teams is not always easy. Create a small core committee drawn from across them, empowered to make tactical decisions and escalate important issues to board level. This approach helps create the orchestration that's the "secret sauce" for an effective crisis response.

PWC -- COVID 19: Confidently navigate through the coronavirus crisis.

<https://www.pwc.com/us/en/library/covid-19/crisis-management.html>

2. Share Your Plan – And Vision – For Recovery

Optimism sells and hope is the one thing in inexhaustible demand right now.

A prudent yet confident, forward looking but realistic stance presents the brand as a rallying point for a besieged public. Consumers will place their faith in companies that are committed to, and are invested in, their future. It takes on a mantle of staying power with which people will readily identify.

These principles are already being applied by the most noteworthy corporations such as Jollibee Foods Corp., JG Summit, SM and Google, to name a few.



All Hands on Deck: These Companies Are Stepping Up to Join the Fight Against the Pandemic

<https://8list.ph/companies-helping-fight-the-pandemic/>



Create space to scan the longer-term horizon

Consider what happens not just today, but tomorrow and beyond. The resulting wider and longer-term perspective can help make the company's emergence from the crisis even stronger and more sustainable.

PWC --How today's response can position your business to thrive tomorrow

<https://www.pwc.com/us/en/library/covid-19/crisis-management.html>

Now is the time to prepare for the inevitable shift in public attention.

Just as the medical emergency brought corporate pandemic planning into sharp focus, the next stage will bring attention to how we manage reputation. Not only to protect brand equity, but also restore consumer confidence.

Paul Zennaro --The time to plan PR for a post COVID-19 world is now

<https://mumbrella.com.au/the-time-to-plan-pr-for-a-post-covid-19-world-is-now-622058>

We at Stratworks regard these as worthy guideposts that promise to bear lasting fruit in the hearts and minds of the publics we and our clients serve. It is also our fervent prayer that we all remain safe during these difficult times.