

BUSINESS AS UNUSUAL

Adapting to protect your business through COVID-19

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Our first priority is the safety and health of our loved ones, workforce and the wider population. Uncertainty has taken hold whilst we all move to provide a safe work platform that ensures a level of trade continuity.

But what about our businesses?

The government continue to develop their strategy and are adding support for businesses as priority. These may open routes to relief or create new avenues to market for your business.

Already we are seeing businesses quickly evolving the way they operate in the wake of the COVID-19 virus. Daily routines are being disrupted whilst we all react and adapt to a new normal.

We need to act fast to stay up-to-date as the situation develops, but also use this time to prepare our new mid-term and long-term business strategies.

Both giving our audience what they need now and anticipating how they will need us once the outbreak has passed its peak.

There are positives to be found. From every adversity comes opportunity, and the aim of the following document is to suggest ways to protect and even grow your brand during this time.

QUICK LINKS

Up-to-date global information on the COVID-19 pandemic, visit [WHO.INT](https://www.who.int)

For the Government advice portal, [GOV.UK/CORONAVIRUS](https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus)

For health advice on the virus, visit [NHS.UK](https://www.nhs.uk)

For advice on how you can plan for your business financially, visit [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk)

CALMING THE WATERS

Reviewing the current state of your business, key clients and the market, is the first step to knowing what move to make next. From here we can develop a longer-term plan to carry us across the choppy swells to calmer waters.

LEAD	ADAPT	PLAN
<p>Communication is key. Employees will be looking to business leaders for support and guidance during this time. Now, more than ever, you will need to be a leader and provide the advice and answers that your employees will need. Be honest but positive and proactive. Employees will understandably be concerned about their health, their family's health and job security.</p> <p>Ensure you follow the official guidance of the World Health Organisation (WHO), Government and NHS for what your businesses should be doing to reduce risks and communicate this regularly and clearly with your employees.</p>	<p>Be prepared to adapt the way your business works, including how your employees work. By now, many are working remotely, so ensure that your teams have the technology and equipment they need to maintain efficiency. For many businesses, collaborating and socialising with co-workers is a significant aspect of their working day. Consider setting up Whatsapp groups and video calling to help everyone feel more connected and bolster productivity.</p>	<p>Planning for a situation that is constantly evolving and changing can be difficult, but it's important to plan based on the information you have currently and the likely situation you may find your business in. Plan for the worst and then look at how you could work to offset any of the failings that led to it. Review your operations, from start to end, considering the impact to your suppliers, customers, cash flow and visibility.</p>

For advice on how you can plan for your business financially, visit [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk)

EARLY 'ADAPTORS'

The landscape is changing and in the immediate term it's going to be more digital than ever, so it is integral that you stay visible and communicate well on digital platforms.

Now is not the time to sell, now is the time to advise and help. By adapting now, we will put ourselves in the best position to thrive later. In the short term, it is important you remain visible, relevant and authoritative within your

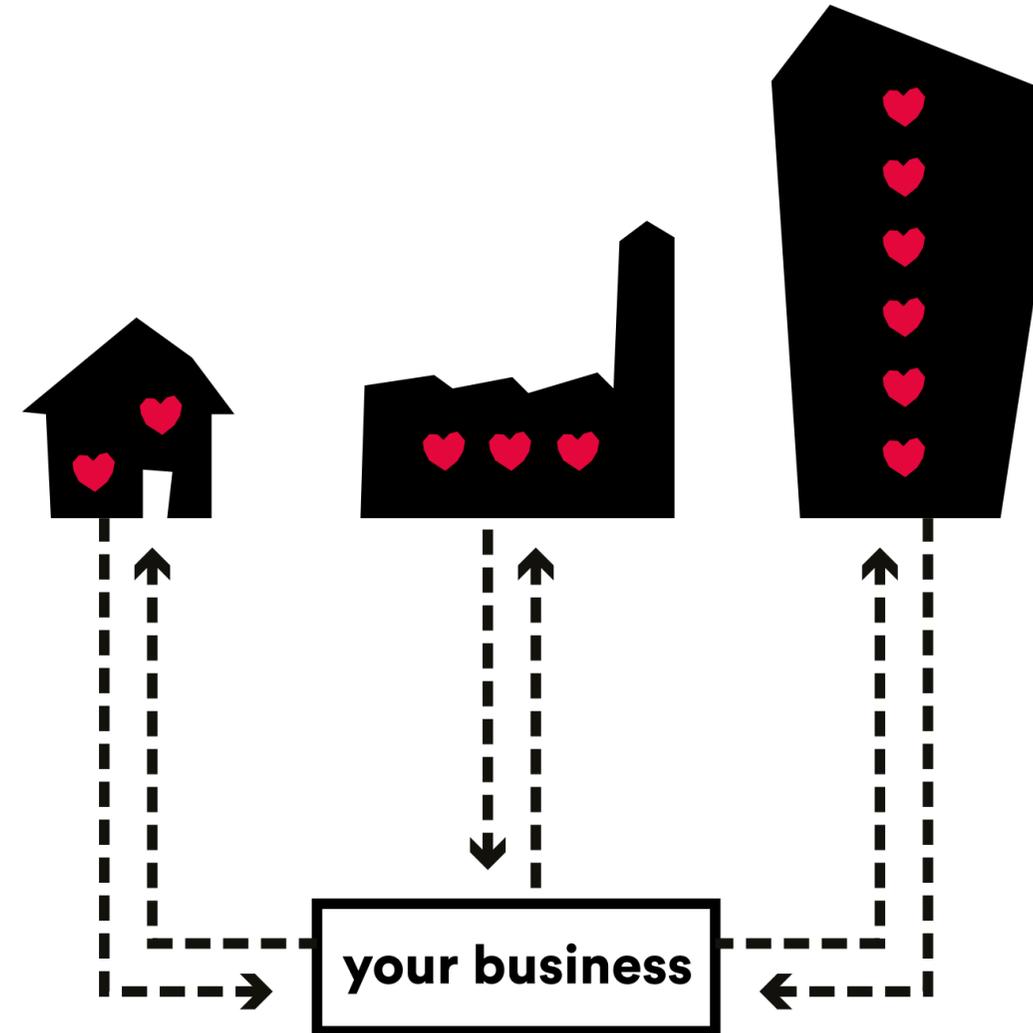
WHY?

The current mind-set of our audience is one uncertainty as we come to terms with the COVID-19 outbreak. There is risk attached to all sales or engagement based communication in such a sensitive market. We must take the correct steps and ensure the we are sympathetic, helpful and above all supportive.

Focus on existing clients and servicing their needs as priority.

industry, keeping to what's important and not striving to achieve engagement and reach during this time.

Keep to the facts, how you can help and product.



NOW & THEN

Confusion and economic uncertainty is forcing us all to change our habits. As the situation develops over the coming weeks and months, we will see time spent online double as people search to stay entertained and connected.

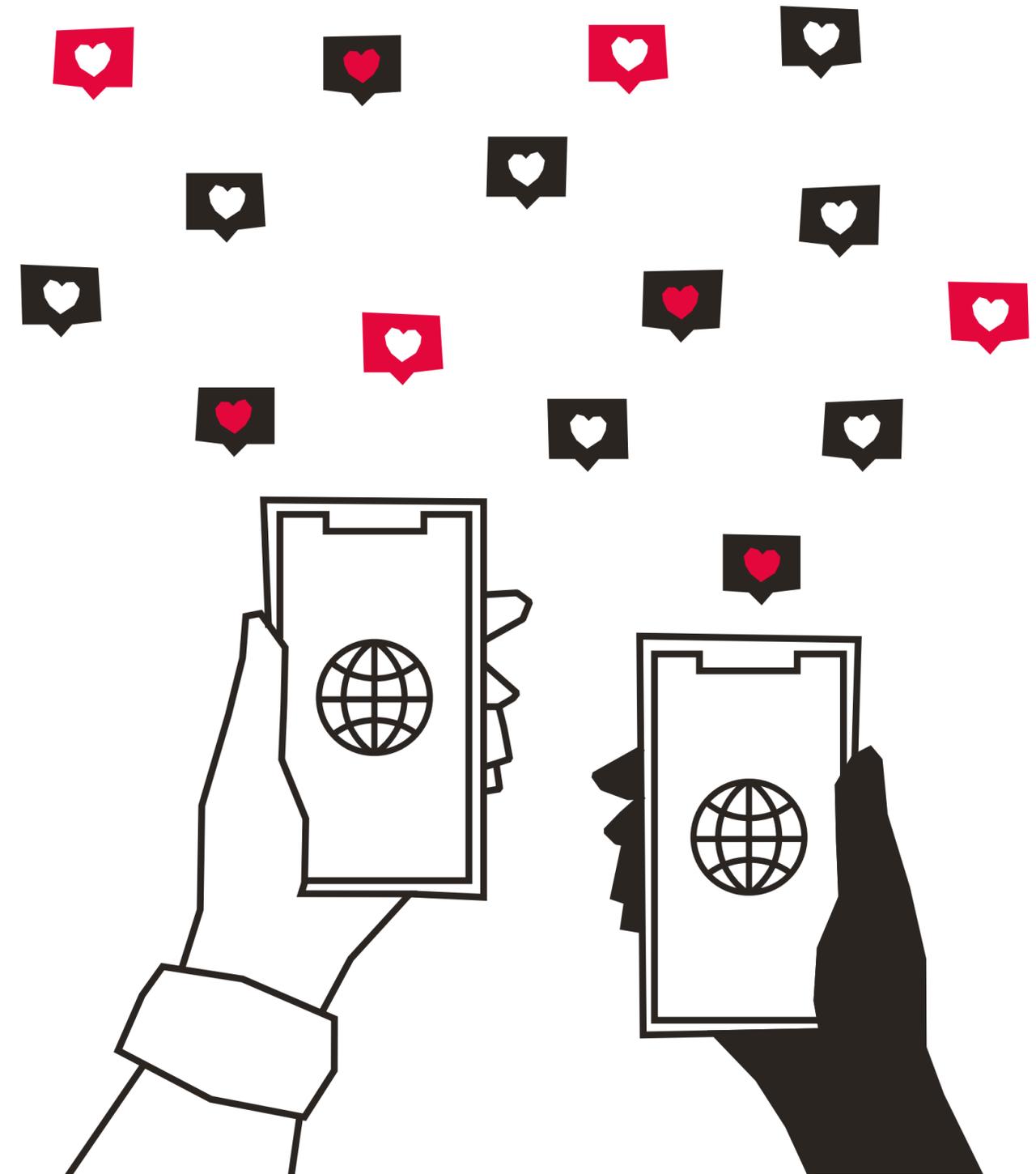
This is the time to engage online, be active and get involved to ensure that people can still turn to you when they require your product or service.

People's lives are changing and their needs are migrating. Influencer lifestyles, for example, that gave people a glimpse into a lifestyle they aspired to, have quickly become

unachievable and gaudy as needs begin to outweigh dreams. That's not to say, however, that people want to now only dwell on the negatives. Businesses will need to adapt their strategies and help foster a sense of community and support. Try to remain relevant and consistent to your core industry and service.

Now more than ever is the time to be honest, human and helpful.

Keep a close on social media platforms and stay up-to-date with the latest information and news so that you can be quick to react and adapt to any changes.



A BRAVE NEW WORLD

We need to be creative and anticipate the lasting effects the COVID-19 pandemic will have on us and our audiences. Their routine and needs will change and as such, our brands will need to adapt too.

This will end, and opportunities will arise. Planning actions now and for when restrictions are lifted will give businesses who react quickest a competitive advantage.

We should develop a clear proposition for clients that focuses on their 'new normal'.

Having a communication plan for now and for when 'normality' returns will help ensure it does.

Here are some of the ways in which businesses can react and adapt to the current 'new normal':

<p>We are being advised to isolate and avoid contact with others.</p>	<p>How do we remove the distance between ourselves and our audience?</p>	<p>We must use our communication channels to provide useful advice and reassurance in the form of physical or digital signage.</p>
<p>Our elderly and vulnerable are becoming more isolated making it harder to reach the outside world and more important for us to care for them.</p>	<p>How can we maintain contact and deliver the support and care they need?</p>	<p>We can use a combination of non-face-to-face forms of communication such as email, print (direct mail), telecoms and digital to reach them and the community around.</p> <p>We need to think laterally as to how we can use our strengths to make a positive difference.</p>
<p>Recovery of businesses and services will be staggered, some are surging now whilst others struggle. Small to medium sized businesses will rely on customer loyalty to keep their operations running.</p>	<p>What can we do to continue delivering our services to our loyal customers?</p>	<p>Our communications will change but we must stay consistent and active, rewarding our audience for their loyalty and ongoing support where possible.</p>
<p>The audience will be looking for a voice of strength and assurance amongst the chatter, they will remember the brands who create stability and support over those trying to capitalise.</p>	<p>What should we do to avoid damaging our brand?</p>	<p>We must use our channels to do good in the community, by offering help or creating new ways to deliver a much needed service with like-minded companies.</p>
<p>Being in isolation will illustrate the importance of digital communication more than ever before.</p>	<p>How should we react now in response to these ongoing developments?</p>	<p>Review your content and replace with new, more relevant content where necessary. Maintain the conversation with your audience and reconsider the behaviours you would usually deem 'normal' for them. Be present but not overwhelming.</p>

HOW CAN WE HELP YOU?

Many of us are feeling the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. Our physical spaces, marketing, budgets, products and internal comms are shifting and need updating to adapt in the upcoming months.

If you need any assistance, advice, help or have a partnership idea in mind, then we are happy to assist however we can.

hello@ginger-root.co.uk

Ginger Root are dedicated to helping you navigate through this time of uncertainty. As such, we are setting up a resource hub with information and resources to help businesses through this unprecedented time.

Please visit:

ginger-root.co.uk/pandemic

or follow our social profiles to stay up-to-date.



Follow us for more updates:  @gingerroot  @Ginger_root  @gingerrootagency



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