

Business marketing tips during lockdown

By  Sylvia Schutte

5 May 2020

With the South African lockdown period extended, many businesses are seeing sales and revenue plummet or even come to a complete standstill.



While you may not be trading for reasons beyond your control, you have to think long-term and realise that, while times are tough at the moment, things will get better.

And when they do, your brand should be the one that makes the most of lockdown brand-building and entrench itself in the minds of consumers, instead of going into a marketing blackout.

With people spending their time at home, there's been an unprecedented increase seen in screen time, which is why online marketing is a logical (and cost-effective) choice right now.

Here are some marketing ideas that you can consider to help your business stand out and stay relevant.

Use your lockdown time well

Analyse the performance of your digital platforms and do some marketing planning on how you'll get your marketing back on track, post lockdown.

Your marketing budget might be slashed, but digital marketing is a great channel to keep your marketing alive until the world comes back to life again. Keep your website and social media pages up to date and plan and create good quality content now – it won't date and you can use it across many channels at a later stage.

Stay connected on social media

People are using social media more than ever during these difficult times. Especially now while they are isolated, they are looking to the internet and social media platforms for information, news updates and to stay connected.

Sure, they might not be booking their next car service or be allowed to order a takeaway, but they are still interested in your

business. They will notice useful, engaging content and are more likely to remember your brand, even if they have never used your services or product before.

Do something good

People will remember your business for the good things it does during this time. Whether you offer a premium discount on insurance policies or change your production business into one that manufactures face masks, the opportunities for winning over customers through goodwill are significant. While you might not be doing this for the marketing, people will remember you for it when they start to spend money again in the future.

Be seen online

More people are online now than ever before. People are browsing on Google and using the platform to research and buy products online. Adapt your website to better reflect the current demand. If you sell food and home essentials, move your luxury items to the back of your website. If you are prohibited from operating now, enable customers to place orders for delivery after lockdown has been lifted.

Improve your website's SEO

If people are searching for items online, you should make it easy for them to find your business. Follow search engine optimisation (SEO) best practices to ensure that your site is featured at the top of search engines when potential customers search for keyword terms in your industry. The last thing you need is to lose potential customers to competitors. Now is a great time to get your development team to optimise your website so that you can hit the ground running when lockdown is lifted.

Use PPC advertising

During a crisis, a knee-jerk reaction might be to cut all expenses. However, by increasing your pay-per-click (PPC) advertising, you are giving your brand a better chance to appear before relevant pairs of eyes. This can give you a tremendous competitive advantage.

Even though your business might be restricted and people might not be able to order from you right now, PPC advertising offers a great way to stand out from your competitors and jump to the front of the queue when consumers have to make a purchasing decision.

Keep on top of your marketing metrics

Now, more than ever, you should be tracking and measuring your marketing data. See what works and do more of it. Stop any marketing that's not making an impact. Stay on top of it daily to ensure you get the best possible ROI for your marketing spend.

Remember, it will get better. By using your time well and your marketing smartly, you will be rewarded.

ABOUT SYLVIA SCHUTTE

Sylvia Schutte is the MD of Stratitude, a full-service marketing agency that provides strategic and creative solutions focussed on making an impact on their clients' brands and their bottom lines.

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