

Fortune favours the brave - especially in a crisis

By [Niamh NicLiam](#), issued by [Incubeta](#)

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Some of the greatest marketing campaigns were conceived in some of the toughest global socio-economic crises. The current lockdown has shown that the smart use of digital marketing can set a company up for future sales success. What's more, savvy digital campaigns can help brands win big, even when trade is restricted.



Getting your daily dose

Our first example of bold action goes back almost 100 years. The Great Depression of 1929 saw huge job losses and many American families were struggling to put food on the table. For some, the only respite from the daily grind were the narrated dramas they would listen to on the radio. In one of the smartest marketing moves of the century, soap producer Procter & Gamble sponsored these daily shows which soon became known as soap operas and even transitioned to television to simply become known as 'soapies'.

Turning your brand into a verb

The oil crisis in the early 70s is not often discussed anymore, but when oil prices skyrocketed in 1973 many logistics companies were forced to shut their doors. FedEx, which had only begun trading two years earlier, boldly pumped money into an ad campaign with the payoff line: "FedEx - when it absolutely, positively has to be there overnight." So catchy was the campaign that the company not only went on to turn a handsome profit, but its name is now used as a verb for the action of sending parcels.

Come for the coffee, stay for the community

The more recent 2008 global financial crisis was responsible for its own share of carnage. The first cutback most consumers make in tough times is on luxuries and, while coffee may be what gets most of us through the day, in 2008 it was hard to justify spending \$4 dollars on a hot drink. Starbucks was teetering on the brink before it reinvented itself.

In a multifaceted social media campaign, Starbucks engaged directly with its customers, asking them for ideas on how it should change its offering. More than 93,000 ideas were shared by 1.3 million users on social media. But, more importantly, over 100 customer ideas were implemented from the My Starbucks Idea campaign, proving that the chain was listening to its community.

South Africa steps up with its own winners

Known for our innovation, some companies in South Africa chose to rise to the challenge during the Covid-19 crisis, using the downtime to prepare for the future. Motoring stalwart, Hyundai South Africa, was one of these forward-thinking companies.

Working the digital channels to build a sales pipeline

The local car market was already under pressure when the coronavirus hit our shores. By March, year-on-year sales of new cars were down 35% for new vehicles and 31% for used vehicles and we had barely moved into Level 5.

One of the key challenges for auto retailers is to capture the attention of the potential buyer. Today's car customers are making just two (or fewer) dealership visits before making their decision. Rather, consumers are relying on digital channels

to help with the car buying journey – from the initial research, to searching for the best deals and even getting real time advice. It's clear that digital interactions are just as important as the engagement with the salesperson on the showroom floor.

Working with the Hyundai SA's marketing team, Incubeta isolated the five unique micro-moments in the buyers' journey. A dedicated media strategy tied to each of these micro moments were developed, framing measurements through the lens of the shopper and their needs.

When most motor companies were pulling back on digital efforts, the Incubeta teams were able to generate significant leads, driving a substantial number of feet through the showroom door for test drives the moment Level 3 allowed. What's more, the team lowered the cost per lead by a whopping 80%, driving efficiencies into the marketing efforts at a time when the business needed it most.

Keeping the tills ringing during a crisis

As South Africa went into lockdown in March, local businesses were feeling the effects trying to plan for an unknown future. Our retailers were left with the huge responsibility of ensuring an uninterrupted supply of essential foods and medicines.

At this time, the Incubeta team had been working with one of South Africa's leading national retailers for just a few months. The chain's delivery service had to be rapidly upscaled to meet delivery. However, as with all newly created offerings, driving interest in the offering was going to be a challenge, especially in an environment of fear and uncertainty.

The retailer's service was only available to shoppers who lived within a close proximity of certain stores. This limited and specific customer profile made it perfect for a hyperlocal marketing campaign.

The Incubeta team used social, display and Youtube campaigns relying on geotargeting. The efforts to rapidly reach their target market saw a 140% increase in average daily app installs during the lockdown. In fact, the demand was so great that additional drivers were hired and the supply chain was also quickly upscaled to meet demand.

To sum up, there are many examples of how organisations can reap the rewards if they buck the trend during crises and, rather than batten down the hatches, adopt a more hopeful and expansive attitude. It has been our experience that putting our technical prowess and global insight to work alongside these marketing leaders can deliver excellent results. In fact, it's precisely this kind of attitude that will be required for companies to pull through the difficult months ahead.

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