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Philly ad exec Leo Levinson's 15 tips on rational marketing during COVID-19 crisis

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These are challenging times, to be sure, but that doesn't mean your marketing should stop. This crisis offers incredible opportunities for you and your firm to leap ahead, as long as you keep your head. Here are some valuable tips for staying in the game and then, for developing readiness to roar back once things resume.

- Today, more people are at home looking at their computers – both working and personal – yet many companies are cutting their messages to them. This is not rational. With more eyeballs, there is more potential. Take advantage of it by stepping up digital advertising, boosted posts, Google keyword advertising, blogging and more.
- Although a blatant sales message may not be well-received during these times, here are some messaging strategies that will be engaging:

posted tips (like these)

free video training or info webinars

humor

good news how your company or employees are doing good deeds

creating virtual events online, etc.

- Craft your message in terms how your company can be helpful to customers during these times. Promote those services and educate people how to use them. (Hmmm, wonder why companies like banks aren't marketing apps that permit banking from home or office?)

- For service businesses (consulting, legal, financial, etc.) and for firms that have scientific or engineering prowess, now is a good time to enhance your brand as a thought leader. As followers learn something, your company's stature grows, while also boosting those experts within your organization as thought leaders.

Four forms of media that are especially effective during these times:

social media

email

digital advertising

publicity about you and your company in media.

- Don't limit your marketing to paid advertising and social media, harness your company media to deliver your message, as well.

Things like your website, blog, internal newsletters, virtual meetings, email signatures and more should also be utilized.

- Yes, this crisis is going to end. What's next? Consider marketing opportunities for your products as the crisis starts to fade. Don't wait as that time may happen sooner than later.

- Frequency and consistency are keys to success in advertising and social media during normal times. Now, it's true even more. Plan to add another post a day or even another day or two a week to your social media schedule and keep your brand tops in awareness.

- If you aren't able to sell products the regular way you do, here are five other methods to consider:

by online ordering

as take out or no contact delivery

Skype or phone consultation

online or typed chat consultation

as repair or maintenance services. Pivot your marketing to support them.

- Unfortunately, we are all faced with a lot of down time these days. Use yours to review your information foundation – website design, brochures, videos and other marketing materials. Review the look, case studies, messages etc. In normal times, you rarely seem to have enough time to pay attention to these. Now you do.

- Now is a good time to do market research because people have more time to fill out a survey on what customers think about you and your products/services.
- Have you developed your reentry marketing plan? While most businesses will be slow to kick their marketing back in gear. Don't you be. Hint: be sensitive to the environment, but assertive, to take advantage of competitors still being asleep.
- There are a lot of media deals out there. Now is a great time to negotiate some amazing media buys for the rest of the year.
- Be prepared to be noticed (and to generate immediate sales) the minute things start to normalize. Create that mega-offer customers can't refuse and have a plan ready to promote it, but only for a very limited time.
- This crisis presents a major market share grabbing opportunity. Most likely, your competitors will have stopped marketing or will bring marketing back slowly. Take market share from them by keeping your message out there and then having a solid plan in place for the moment things turn around.

Stay rational (and healthy), my friends!

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