

MARKETING “FORWARD” DURING COVID-19



TACTIC 5: PRIORITIZING TOP-FUNNEL & MID-FUNNEL MARKETING

There are two sides to the COVID-19 coin in terms of marketing. “Heads” reveals what can be done right now to connect your brand with your audience and to support your customers. “Tails” shows that there will be a lasting impact of these actions after the current COVID-19 pandemic subsides.

To help you with both, let’s review some of the ways that top- and mid-funnel marketing (awareness, discovery, nurturing, and consideration) can be your greatest assets right now—and will also help you in the months and years to come.

Focus on Awareness & the Basics:

Customers need to know that you are open for business and, if you are, how your products or services are still available. This may sound like a no-brainer, but over the past 30 days there has been a huge spike in searches like “open for business.” What does this search (and related searches) mean? It means that people are adjusting and trying to figure out how to function while being sheltered in place. Consider focusing your messaging on the basics. Let your audience know you are open or available, how they can do business with you, and the easiest way to contact your company or make a purchase.

Consider updating your outbound marketing (ads, social, email, etc.) with the intent of letting the world know you are open, available, and ready to help your customers. Need some help? Let us know.

Keep Things Cost Effective:

Staying at home has led to a massive influx of consumers searching for ways to fill the hours of the day. So where are they turning to for inspiration and ideas? Social media platforms like Facebook and YouTube have seen double-digit traffic growth in just a few weeks, which means there is plenty of attention just waiting for you to grab it.

Facebook and YouTube both have very cost-effective options for outbound advertising to help fill your top and mid funnels. This all depends on your industry, of course, but if you are trying to stay in front of your audience, these are two places you should not ignore.

If you need a digital advertising expert to look at your ad accounts to review where the greatest opportunity may be for your outbound top- and mid-funnel efforts, let us know. We understand that every ad dollar counts now more than ever, and rest assured that this will be at the forefront of our recommendations.

Think of Engagement as Your Silent Asset:

Top- and mid-funnel marketing are heavily focused on driving awareness or reigniting interest, so you need to be proactive—now. You can't wait for all this to be over and expect your traffic to just magically return. Engagement will, at the most, cost you time—but it will be time well spent. Social media engagement = communication, and communication = awareness. Answer questions publicly, comment on posts, provide honest thoughts and considerations that your customers will find valuable. Most importantly—do it every day.

If you have not spent time engaging regularly, this can sound like a daunting task. If you're not sure how or where to get started, let us know and we'll be happy to share some additional engagement tips and strategies to help drive (and retain) awareness during this time of uncertainty.

“Boost” Live Updates Regularly:

Combining the cost effectiveness of display advertising with the power of engagement is a good move for any business. One easy way to do this is with a Facebook Live (or prerecorded) video from your phone. Share “three ways we are here to help you.” Whether your business is now offering curbside pickup and discounts, free product delivery, or service extensions, this is all information that your customers need to know. Your video doesn't need to be perfect—it just needs to be real. As long as the content you're sharing provides true value, then include it. Use this video as a standard post and give it a “boost” on Facebook. Even putting \$5 or \$10 a day will help push your message to a wider audience in a way that's cost effective for your business.

If you have an idea (or need one) and would like to put an awareness strategy like this to work, we're here to help strategize and get your content boosted ASAP.

Promote What Matters Now:

This may sound “fluffy,” but right now, those who are sheltering in place want and need convenience and comfort. During this pandemic, messages like “Delivered directly to your door!” will mean more than “We offer the widest selection in our industry.” If there is any way you can make your product or service more convenient, easier to access, and/or more helpful, double down and promote that core solution. Use these “problem-solves” in your messaging to help catch more discovery traffic and awareness. As our current situation begins to return to normal, that's when you can consider peppering “features” back into your messaging.

We know that pivoting your ad messaging can be difficult. We have been helping many of our clients make updates like these, so if you need assistance, we're happy to provide some approaches that can work for you and/or implement this messaging.

As the weeks go by, we are seeing shifts in the effectiveness of nearly every area of marketing. The way consumers search, what actions they take, and which purchases they make are all being influenced by a myriad of factors far beyond the control of most brands at this time. With so much uncertainty, it's important to focus on what impact you can have rather than put all your energy into worrying about what you cannot control.

If you are looking for additional strategies, tactics, and approaches that you can put to use during the current situation surrounding COVID-19, we encourage you to check out the rest of our Marketing "Forward" During COVID-19 series. You can download the other four PDFs in this series for free at nationalpositions.com/ebook.

Stay safe, productive, and healthy—and we're here when you need us.



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