

GUIDELINES FOR UNDERSTANDING YOUR CUSTOMER BEHAVIOUR AND INCREASE YOUR SALES

MONITOR YOUR SALES AND MARKETING



COVID-19 has brought a major shift in sales patterns and it is expected that consumers will pay more attention to their expenses, with less spending on movies, restaurant visits, luxury goods, leisure travel even after the magnitude of the outbreak lessens. Consumers are expected to be more concerned about health and hygiene products, healthy organic food, medical needs, fitness etc. Thus, it is important for businesses to be aware and develop responses to this new trend in consumer behaviour. However, before devising new strategies, one must critically reassess what is proposed to the customer.

Product portfolio

At this stage, it is important to think about your products. You must ask yourself, if the service or product that you are providing will be purchased by a customer in this particular situation? Go through all your products and make a list identifying those that will be immediately sold, those that the customer will not want currently due to the pandemic and those products or services that need to be repackaged/revamped for you to reach potential customers.

Customers

Know your customer (KYC). Who are your customers? What are their profiles, their likes, preferences and dislikes? What are their needs with regards to the service or product that you produce and sell? This will help you to effectively match your product/service to the needs of the customer.

Find below an example of an SME manufacturing detergents for schools

Client Company	Needs (post COVID-19)	Product(s) that can be sold immediately	Product(s) that can be changed/developed to meet needs
Little Angels - Preprimary school)	Regular deep cleaning to reduce risk of contamination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Soaps • Detergents 	Build a comprehensive cleaning programme for a classroom and propose them to schools suggesting type of detergents to be used for desks, floors, doorknobs, windows etc. thereby promoting sales. Possibilities to sell the cleaning programme to schools in Mauritius.



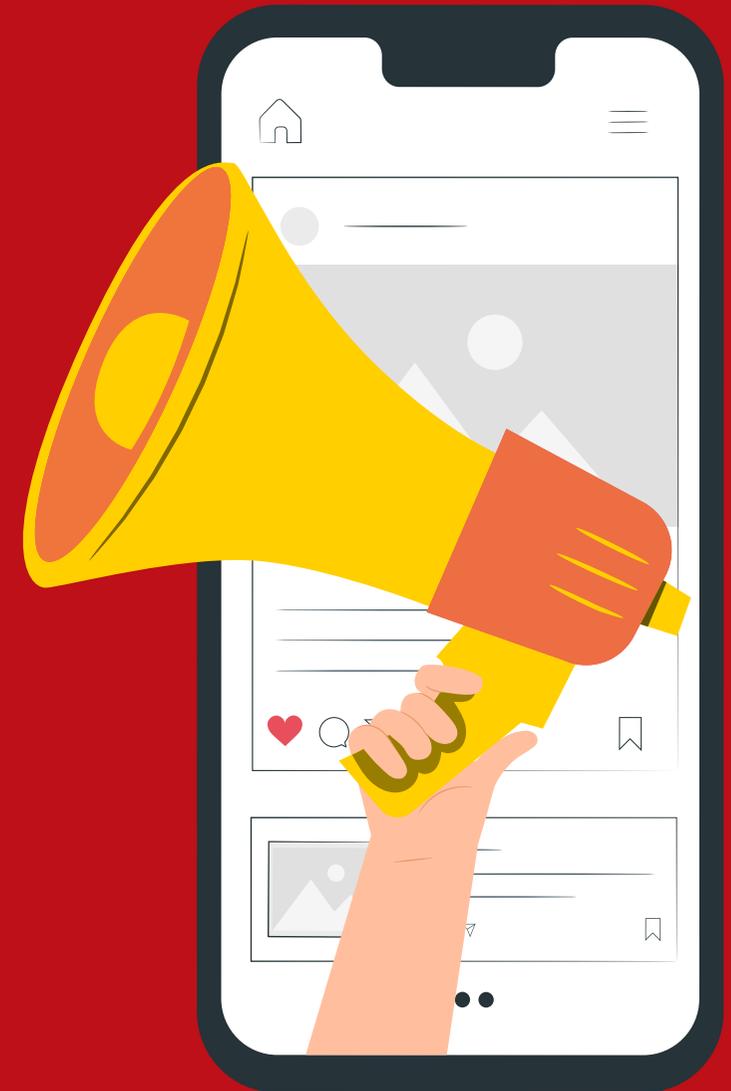
Selling Strategy

If most of your products can be sold immediately, it is important to let your customers know that you can continue to supply them with the products and services. Call your customers or email them about your products at hand, that are already in your store and ready to be delivered as soon as lockdown is over. Consider using online platforms and social media. Facebook is a great tool to make people know about your products. Build a coherent customer communication plan and try to preserve and enhance customer loyalty so that you develop a better relationship with your customers to avoid cancellation of orders.

In case most of your products/service cannot be sold immediately you need to rethink your strategy, your segments and short-term activities. Since you already know your customer profile you can easily identify your new market segments. Consider other customer profiles (for example, older individuals and those who work from home). How can you help them? Adapting your products and services will be a competitive advantage as people's behavior continues to change.

When building your new strategy, keep in mind the following points below:

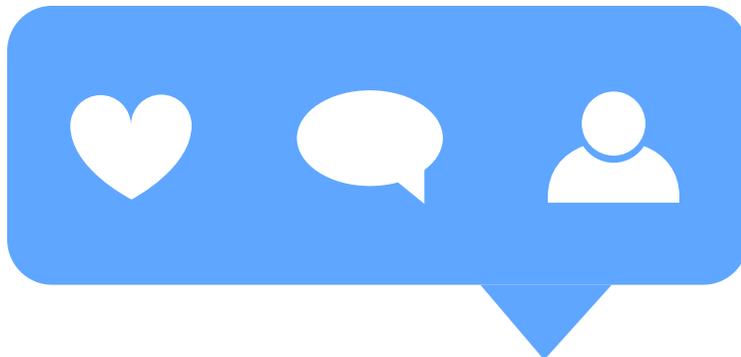
- Evaluate your competitive position under the new environment, identifying both risks and opportunities.
- Assess the changes in customer behavior after the pandemic (e.g. buyer habits, increase of online buying?).
- Analyse the current demand for your product or services.
- Update your sales and demand planning strategy. Keep realistic targets, people might be extra conscious while buying.
- Create an action plan against the core marketing and sales priority areas (including inventory planning, pricing strategy and discounting).



Adapting your Sales to the New Reality

What is relevant this week can change the next. A willingness to adapt, move quickly and grow will help during a crisis. Consider a "service over sales" approach. Provide service with ideas, discounts, suspended fees, or great content. **Service should outshine sales for a while.** You can now provide a different and better customer experience. The possibilities are endless, businesses need to adapt and look to other channels to reach customers. send the right message to the right people at the right time.

- Do you have many pending orders not yet delivered?
- Have you been in touch with your customers lately (via email, phone calls etc.) to inform them about any pending orders etc.?
- If yes, can you innovate and explore more opportunities?
- If no, can you think about an innovative way to bring your products or services to your customers?
- Are there new products and services that you can offer that are complimentary to your current offering that will help fill new needs?



Before proposing new products, it is essential that you know about new consumer trends and the shift in consumer behaviour.

Changes in Consumer Behaviour during Covid-19

A Nielsen investigation has identified six key consumer behavior threshold levels that tie directly to concerns around the COVID-19 outbreak. The thresholds offer early signals of spending patterns, and these patterns are being mirrored across multiple markets.

COVID-19 has forever changed the experience of being a customer, an employee, a citizen and a human. The enforced shift during the worst of the pandemic to virtual working, consuming and socializing will fuel a massive and further shift to virtual activity for anything. Anything that can be done virtually will be. According to threshold level 6 - "LIVING A NEW NORMAL", it shows that in response to the spread of COVID-19, consumers are changing their shopping behaviour (for example: increased used of e-commerce) in ways that could shape future buying patterns. Winners will be those who test and explore all of the associated creative possibilities.

Shifting to Nontraditional Marketing – Digital Marketing

In response to customer behaviour, business owners now have a wide range of digital methods at their fingertips that can be adapted to suit their objectives, budget or industry. However, it is important to redefine your new business model, before adopting technology. This will help ensure using technology in an effective manner so that we meet the needs that we set out to achieve.

Six key consumer behavior threshold levels that tie directly to concerns around the COVID-19 outbreak.

#1 PROACTIVE HEALTH-MINDED BUYING	#2 REACTIVE HEALTH MANAGEMENT	#3 PANTRY PREPARATION
CONSUMER BEHAVIOR SHIFTS		
Interest rises in products that support overall maintenance of health and wellness.	Prioritize products essential to virus containment, health and public safety. E.g. face masks	Pantry stockpiling of shelf-stable foods and a broader assortment of health-safety products; spike in store visits; growing basket sizes.
COMMON COVID-19 EVENT MARKERS		
Minimal localized cases of COVID-19 generally linked to an arrival from another infected country.	Government launches health and safety campaign. Local transmission and / or first COVID-19 related death(s).	Small quarantines begin; borders close more broadly. Often represented by accelerating cases of COVID-19, but not necessarily by deaths.
#4 QUARANTINED LIVING PREPARATION	#5 RESTRICTED LIVING	#6 LIVING A NEW NORMAL
CONSUMER BEHAVIOR SHIFTS		
Increased online shopping, a decline in store visits, rising out-of-stocks, strains on the supply chain.	Severely restricted shopping trips, online fulfillment is limited, price concerns rise as limited stock availability impacts pricing in some cases.	People return to daily routines (work, school, etc.) but operate with a renewed cautiousness about health. Permanent shifts in supply chain, the use of e-commerce and hygiene practices.
COMMON COVID-19 EVENT MARKERS		
Localized COVID-19 emergency actions. Restrictions against large gatherings; schools and public places close down. Percentage of people diagnosed continues to increase.	Mass cases of COVID-19. Communities ordered into lockdown. Restaurant closures, restrictions on small gatherings.	COVID-19 quarantines lift beyond region/country's most-affected hotspots and life starts to return to normal.

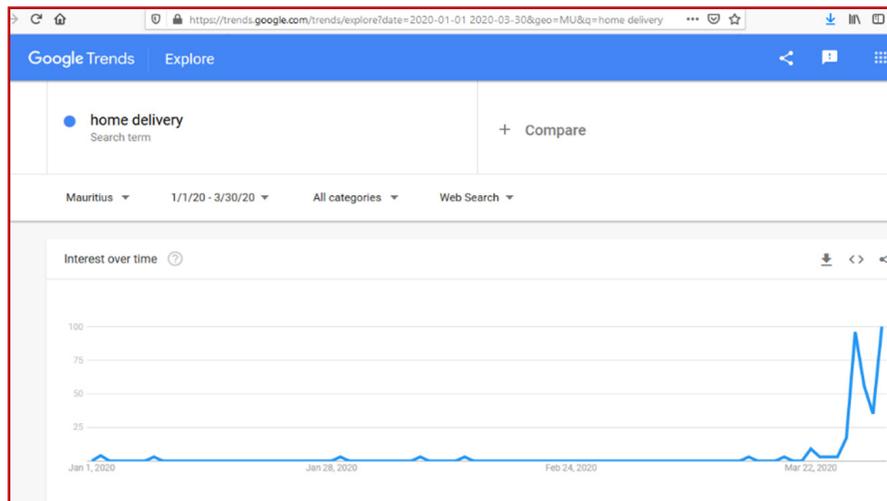
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Source: <https://www.nielsen.com/sg/en/insights/article/2020/key-consumer-behavior-thresholds-identified-as-the-coronavirus-outbreak-evolves/>



Change your Business Model to meet the New Expectations of your Future Customers

According to 'Google Trends', in the last 90 days, keyword searches for delivery of groceries and restaurant food take out has started to grow drastically in Mauritius. In fact, 'Google Trends' reports that searches for "Home Delivery" has grown over the past month on a nationwide basis. This data shows that consumers are changing now, but we are also creating a new norm after Covid-19 is long gone.



Source: Google

Adapt your Marketing Post Covid-19

Take some time and answer these questions:

- **What are the trends you see changing the world today?**
(Think about how your consumers will change post-COVID)
- **What changes do you see in your industry?**
(Technology enhanced experience is becoming more important)
- **How are these trends changing your industry?**
(Will more of your customers book your services online?)
(Will more of them text you instead of calling?)
- **How can you take advantage of these trends?**
(E-Commerce, ...)



Develop your Covid-19 Marketing Strategies

Brands Must Act Differently Today

REAL-TIME RESPONSE TO MARKETPLACE CONDITIONS

- 1**
ACT ON SHIFTING CONDITIONS
Retarget trade and marketing strategy in real-time
- 2**
WIN AT DIGITAL SHELF
Win at the digital shelf through availability and search presence
- 3**
EASE SOCIAL DISTANCING
Ease social distancing through digital and in-home solutions

Source: <https://cdn2.hubspot.net/hubfs/297370/COVID-infographic-for-retailers-adlucent.pdf>

Rapid Retargeting of Investments to Align to Consumer Shopping Behaviors



Monitor shifting volume between in-store and online and **adjust trade and online** media to where your consumers are shopping

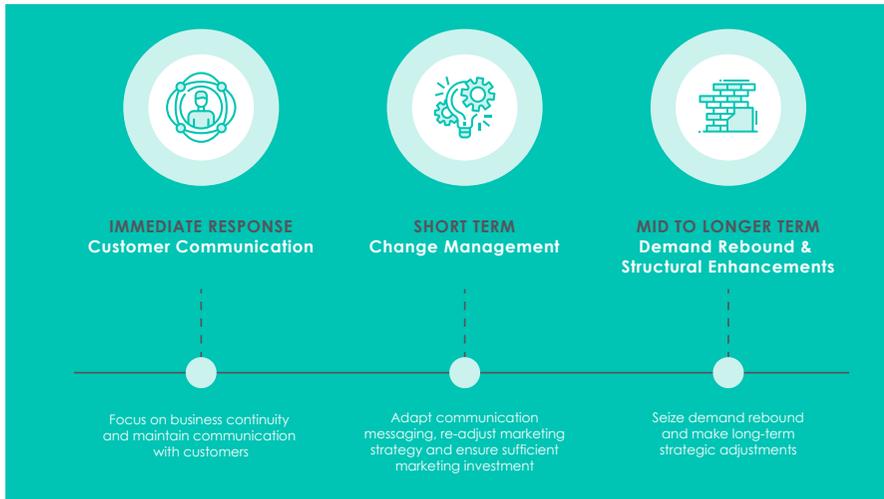
Monitor demand shifts via a robust, item-level scorecard to flag **supply chain issues**

Source: <https://cdn2.hubspot.net/hubfs/297370/COVID-infographic-for-retailers-adlucent.pdf>

Review your company's model to go with consumer trends that will become the new norm.

- Re-evaluate the customer experience
- More electronic booking of your services (e-commerce, Facebook, WhatsApp etc.)
- More electronic communications with your customers
- Enable payment online (Internet Banking, My.T money, Paypal, MCB Juice,...)





Source: <https://cdn2.hubspot.net/hubfs/297370/COVID-infographic-for-retailers-adlucent.pdf>

Engage your Customers on Social Platforms

Develop a strategy for how to leverage social media (Facebook, paid ads, LinkedIn, ...)

It is important to use the proper combination of online tools while developing your digital marketing strategies. For example, by listing your company on Google my Business, people might be interested to view your Facebook profile. Thus, it is important to always identify the right online tools and use the right combination to arouse people's interest in your company and its products. Also, remember to always update your profile and provide the right information. This will ensure that you get good reviews and will promote your visibility and increase your goodwill with your customers.

Build your online presence through dominance on online availability and search presence

For example, by using Google My Business. Upload all the relevant information on your business including the address, contact details, offered services/products, and you create a Google My Business listing. Your business will appear on Google Maps as well as within the Google Map search results. Additionally, you can also display information such as your opening times, etc, directly within the search engine.



Create an Online Presence

To help businesses make this transition use existing tools and resources in new ways, FACEBOOK FOR BUSINESS has picked out four tips to help small businesses create an internet presence and stay engaged with customers during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Create a Social Media Account

Businesses can establish a digital presence and proactively share important information with customers by creating a free Facebook Page and Instagram Business Account. These tools enable businesses to tell customers who they are and what they are able to offer during this unprecedented time. They give businesses the chance to show up for new or returning customers online just like how it might happen in a physical store.

Use Existing Channels to Communicate with Customers

Businesses have the opportunity to include information about safety measures, the handling of customer inquiries, any expected shipping delays and more on existing channels like a company website or customer emails.

Pivot an In-Person Event to an Online Streaming Event

At a time where businesses have had to postpone or cancel events, they have invested time and money preparing for, Facebook Live and Instagram Live have emerged as key tools to help businesses' transition events from in-person to digital.

Update Existing Content or Create New Content

Adjusting business hours and service methods to accommodate changes caused by coronavirus safety measures may put existing content out of date. This could be anything from Page information to old posts to ad content. To avoid customer confusion, small businesses could consider reviewing content to make sure it reflects their most recent changes.

Helpful Online Resources

- <https://anicca.co.uk/blog/how-to-adapt-your-digital-marketing-strategy-during-the-covid-19-coronavirus-outbreak/>
- <https://anicca.co.uk/blog/digital-marketing-whats-working-during-covid-19-coronavirus-lockdown/>
- <https://www.digitalmarketer.com/digital-marketing/>
- <https://www.wearemarketing.com/blog/a-step-by-step-guide-to-structuring-a-digital-marketing-plan.html>
- <https://www.responsival.com/post/maintaining-the-digital-side-of-your-business-during-the-covid-19-pandemic>
- <https://consulting.kantar.com/podcasts/how-will-covid19-affect-the-retail-market/>

Sources

- <https://www.facebook.com/business/news/helping-businesses-create-an-online-presence-during-covid-19-coronavirus>



The NPCC can facilitate the discussions for the modules where you need us most.
We can arrange for online discussions and group work.

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