

How to Balance Next Steps with COVID-19 — without Getting Whiplash

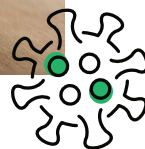
Anticipating the shift from short-to long-term communications

The definition of the “new normal” and how to handle internal and external communications is top of mind for marketers as the U.S. attempts to reopen and return to business. Marketers are challenged by how to carefully transition from the recent months of rapid-fire crisis communications and updates to re-engaging audiences with meaningful long-term communications. It’s a tough task — and one that could easily lead to confusion and mixed messages without the right approach.

START WITH A COMMUNICATIONS CHECKLIST

The following steps will guide you through important considerations for getting back to longer-term connections with all audiences:

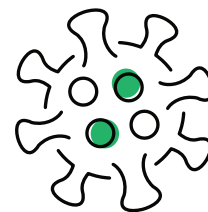
- ❑ **Audit your recent COVID-19 communications:** What topics did you address – and how often did you communicate both with internal staff and external audiences? Make sure you keep these interactions in mind when planning your long-term strategy. Even as you switch gears with tone, maintain consistency with messaging and style to deliver a seamless, connected brand experience.
- ❑ **Maintain current COVID communications:** Continue to communicate what your organization is doing for safety regarding COVID-19. And plan to integrate updated other messaging slowly to help ease audiences back into a somewhat normal state.
- ❑ **Use your data to drive future decisions:** How was your content received? What content worked – or didn’t? Check your open rates – evaluate whether specific days or times were more impactful than others? Take this opportunity to use your collected data to drive decisions as you develop your next phase of communications.
- ❑ **Remain forward-thinking:** Position your communications as thoughtful and helpful, but stay mindful about what your audiences have experienced over the past several months. Include updates about innovations that your organization has implemented to improve operations or efficiencies – both with internal and external communications. Think broadly across communication channels – and consider new digital channels that audiences are accessing as they spend more time online.
- ❑ **Create a content calendar:** Keep an eye on upcoming holidays, industry virtual events or conferences and planned product or service launches – anything that is relevant to your audiences. These time-sensitive events will help you communicate relevant messaging with a softer communications approach.



CREDIBILITY AND TRUST REMAIN KEY TO A SMOOTH TRANSITION

Keep a mindset of credibility and trust as you transition from how you've been communicating to a broader, long-term strategy. Be realistic about your expectations – and remember that everyone has a different experience through this time – and a different perspective of what is most important to them.

We'd love to hear from you!



If your organization needs support in your communications strategy – and how to begin to transition, our team at MERGE is just a phone call away. Learn more at <https://mergeworld.com/marketing-advertising-services/creative-and-communications>.