

Social Tips

(For socially distant times)

A COLLABORATIVE PIECE BY

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SOVEREIGN STATE

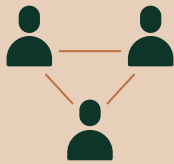
It's a complicated time to be alive, to say the least, which means it's a complicated time to be in business.

Hard to know what is right and how to help your communities, let alone how to help yourself.

One thing we do know for sure is that many folks see the businesses in their communities as community leaders. For a variety of reasons a business tends to have added weight behind their messaging. It's that weight that results in many of your favourite local restaurants, liquor brands, and design agencies having thousands of followers. What can you do for those followers right now? What can you do about those followers right now? We like the idea of

keeping the conversation going to help everyone get used to the new normal; to be creative, constructive, and lend a helping hand.

Whether you're trying to figure out what to share on social media right now, or you haven't even had time to think about your social channels, we don't recommend anyone stop posting during this time for a few reasons; **we're here to tell you why and try to help.**



1

Human connections

The current state of affairs has created new opportunities in terms of how you can relate to your customer/community base.

Messaging may normally be focused around sales and appealing to people's interests; now, we can look to publish messaging focused around transparent sharing and appealing to people's emotional well being.

By keeping us apart, the world is encouraging us to connect with our communities in ways outside the status quo. Appealing to your community on an emotional and human level can be seen as an opportunity to strengthen that community base for the betterment of now as well as for the future. It's about keeping the conversation going for the greater good, despite the surrounding change.



2

Strength in numbers

Social media platforms are busier now more than ever. Instagram views have doubled in many places around the world. Facebook execs Alex Schultz (VP of Analytics) and Jay Parikh (VP of Engineering) shared that "The usage growth from COVID-19 is unprecedented across the industry, and we are experiencing new records in usage almost every day." You can read a bit more about what Facebook (who owns social platforms Instagram and WhatsApp too) has to say about their services as they relate to COVID-19 so far here:

bit.ly/FacebookCovidNews

The sheer number of eyes on the platforms at this time should not go ignored. The opportunity to make more meaningful connections may be a richer opportunity now than it has ever been.



3

Play by the rules

For those who don't know, when it comes to Instagram in particular there is an algorithm used to determine who sees what content when. The algorithm wants you to post and making the algorithm happy is an easy way to follow "best practices" when approaching social.

If you stop posting, you slow your roll in terms of ingratiating yourself with the Instagram algorithm. If you're not posting, someone else is. That means Instagram is showing that content to your followers instead of showing them what you could have posted. You should want to be remembered, right? Regular posting habits are rewarded with more of your followers being shown your content; regular posting amplifies your message. A halt in posting works to shorten your soapbox over time; your future content will be worse off in terms of the extent to which it is shared by the algorithm. You can always re-earn your "gold stars" but we think staying on the up and up is an easy best practice to follow.

"It's about keeping the conversation going for the greater good, despite the surrounding change."

On board with the **why**, but still not sure **what** to share on social?

Here are some ideas:



1

Make people feel good

Perhaps you're used to making people food at your restaurant in order to bring them joy, shaking them a drink at your bar, finding them a dress from your shop, crafting a bouquet of flowers, even copywriting, consulting, designing, the list goes on. Whatever it is that you do, you can find a way to share a similar energy with the visual and verbal mediums of social content. Motivational messages, funny pictures, galleries of inspiration, recipes, distractions, updates on the people behind your brand, tips and tricks, ideas, old memories; share the good stuff right now, and share it from your brand's point of view.



2

Do you have something to sell

We know it can feel conflicting (read: icky) to focus on sales strategies during a crisis. We once heard someone (very smart) say that you shouldn't feel guilty making money during a crisis, rather it's making money *from* a crisis that's not kosher. Trying to help your business survive during this time is fine, so long as you're doing so as ethically as possible. Sell Lysol Wipes, just don't sell them for \$30.

Whether you have an obvious revenue stream like t-shirts for sale online, or less obvious like tickets to a future event (date unknown), or even taking payments now for future use if your business doesn't have a traditional gift card system in place, there is reason to promote it.

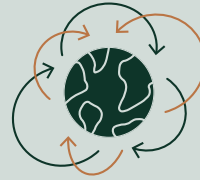
In fact there is a big conversation happening currently online about supporting small businesses. Instead of saying "buy this thing" consider posing it as a question and conversation: "Are you looking to support #local and #small? Because if you are, we have this option and your support – any kind of support – is so welcomed right now." Consider offering your goods and services at a discount or with increased value; a way to keep your livelihood, and help people at the same time. Some businesses are selling \$120 gift cards for \$100, others are covering the shipping costs of their goods. Finding ways to be nice about what you need to sell shouldn't be shamed.



3

Amplify important information

Use your account to share messages that relate to your community. Are you a restaurant that can get more eyes on the #SaveHospitalityCA movement? Are you a retail store that can appeal to designers and ask for them to make gowns for medical workers? Are you a freelancer who can share the government's info about financial support benefits to your community (you're not alone in trying to sort out the CERB). Don't focus on sharing information about the pandemic and its effects, but rather share information about the solutions that are being created to help people like yourself and your followers. Helping your neighbours find the cup of sugar you're all looking for is what empathy is all about.



4

Engage with the world at large

Do you have things you are watching on Netflix, or items you've bought from small businesses that you want to support? Tagging businesses, sharing other's content, commenting on and liking what others are publishing, or even using social media as a way to check in with your peers and start conversations are all great options.



5

Hone your communication across the board

Simply not wanting to post on social right now? Feeling like your posting will only add to the noise, not be helpful enough, or be in poor taste? While our opinion is that there are always good vibes to spread, we "hear" you quiet ones. So what other ways does your brand get social? Might be time to audit and edit. Menus, program packages, brochures, websites, email templates, user experience communication, online listings, newsletter templates and systems, signage, email signatures; every digital, physical, and tangible interaction with a customer, client, or community member can be honed to perfection. Why not take advantage of this time and get to it; set yourself up for the come back. (Don't forget you can always share those archives and updates with your social community...we think that's a great idea. Remember, if you're spreading vibes someone doesn't like they can always unfollow or mute you...both you and your followers have to do what feels right on a personal level.)

“Both you and your followers have to do what feels right on a personal level.”

Some last words:

A slow in posting regularity is ok (don't add social media to the list of things that are stressing you out right now), but **a full stop may not be the best way to help your business or your community.**

Take the opportunities available to you and try to make **genuine, long term connections,** however it feels right to do it.

Thank you

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